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RUSSIAN FOLK-TALES

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RUSSIAN FOLK-TALES

(TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN)

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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INTRODUCTION

ANY editor of Slav folk-tales starts with great advantages. Russia is a country where artistic development began very late; where popular lore was conserved with little alteration owing to the immensities of the country, the primitiveness of the people, and the punctiliousness of the compilers.

The principal source for Russian folk-tales is the great collection of Afanásev, a coeval of Rybnikov, Kirĕyevski, Sakharov, Bezsonov, and others who all from about 1850 to 1870 laboriously took down from the lips of the peasants of all parts of Russia what they could of the endless store of traditional song, ballad, and folk-tale. These great collectors were actuated only by the desire for accuracy; they appended laboriously erudite notes; but they were not literary men and did not sophisticate, or improve on their material.

But, before venturing on a brief account of the tales, something must be premised as to the position occupied by folk-tales in the cultural development of a people. In Pagan times, there always existed a double religion, the ceremonial worship of the gods of nature and the tribal deities,—a realm of thought in which all current philosophy and idealism entered into a set form that symbolized the State,—and also local cults and superstitions, the adoration of the spirits of streams, wells, hills, etc. To all Aryan peoples, Nature has always been alive, but never universalized, or romanticized, as in modern days; wherever you were, the brook, the wind, the knoll, the stream were all inhabited by agencies,

which could be propitiated, cajoled, threatened, but, under all conditions, were personal forces, who could not be disregarded.

When Christianity transformed the face of the world, it necessarily left much below the surface unaffected. The great national divinities were proscribed and submerged; some of their features reappearing in the legendary feats of the saints. The local cults continued, with this difference, that they were now condemned by the Church and became clandestine magic; or else they were adopted by the Church, and the rites and sanctuaries transferred. The memory of them subsisted; the fear of these local gods degenerated into superstition; the magic of the folk-tales becomes half-fantastic, half-conventional, belief in which is surreptitious, usual, and optional. At this stage of disorganization of local custom, folk-tales arise, and into them, transmitted as they are orally and under the ban of the Church, contaminations of all sorts creep, such as mistaken etymologies, faint memories of real history, reminiscences of lost folk-songs, Christian legend and morals, etc.

The Russian people have handed down three categories of records. First of all, the Chronicles, which are very full, very accurate, and, within the limits of the temporary concepts of possibility and science, absolutely true. Secondly, the ballads or *byliny;* epic songs in an ancient metre, narrating historical episodes as they occur; and also comprising a cycle of heroic romance, comparable with the *chansons de geste* of Charlemagne, the cycles of Finn and Cuchúlain of the Irish, and possibly with the little minor epics out of which it is supposed that some supreme Greek genius built up the artistic epics of the Iliad and the Odyssey. These *byliny* may be ranked as fiction: i.e. as facts of real life (as then understood), applied to non-existent, unvouched, or legendary individuals. They are not bare records of

fact, like the Chronicles; imagination enters into their scope; non-human, miraculous incidents are allowable; their content is not a matter for faith or factual record; they may be called historical fiction, which, broadly taken, corresponded to actual events, and typified the national strivings and ideals. The traditional ceremonial songs, magical incantations and popular melodies are of the same date and in the same style.

Thirdly, the folk-tales. In their matter, these differ little, if at all, from the common Aryan stock. In their treatment, there are well-marked divergencies. They are, in the first place, characterized by the so-called realism that tinges all Russian literature; a better word would be factualism, as realism is associated with the anti-romanticism that accentuates material facts and seeks to obliterate moral factors.

This attitude of mind is rather like that of a careful observer, who has become callous, because he is helpless—an attitude of those who serve and stand and wait.

From the earliest Chronicles to the most modern fiction, this factualism characterizes Russian work. It has reacted on the Folk-tales in several ways; all the more observable as we have them fresh and ungarnished, as the tellers told them.

The stories are not, like the German *Märchen*, neatly rounded off into consequential and purposive stories. The incidents follow almost haphazard; and at the end, the persons mentioned at the beginning may be forgotten; the stories are often almost as casual as real life.

The stories relate experiences in succession, attempt no judgment, do not even affirm their own credibility. Things simply happen; our exertions may sometimes be some good; we can only be quietly resigned. But, unlike the Arabian Nights, there is no positive fatalism; for that would imply a judgment; a warping of facts to suit a theory.

Equally, there is none of the artistic grace of Greek legend, nor the exuberance of Celtic fantasy; both of these are departures from the crude, unilluded, unexpectant observation.

This unconsciously involves a perfect art with regard to detail; so much is told as a man would remember of an experience; there is no striving after impressionalism, nor meticulous detail.

The prevailing tone is sadness; but there is no absence of humour; yet fun merely happens, and is inherent; there is no broad, boisterous fun.

In them, unlike other Aryan folk-tales, there are no fairies, nor giants, nor gnomes, nor personifications of nature. As in his Pagan myths, the Slav never advanced beyond inchoate conceptions of Nature, he neither philosophized like the Hindu, nor created types of pure grace like the Greek, nor beautiful fancies, like the Celt. Where the river-gods [vodyanóy], or the wood-sprites [lěši], have human form, it is to a certain extent because they have been contaminated with the Christian Devil.

To sum up, these undiluted products of the Russian people are a faithful mirroring of life, as it appeared, casual; for the most part unfortunate, and inscrutable.

There are some very frequent supernatural beings. The Witch who lives in the forest, rides the winds in a mortar, devours human flesh, lives in a hut on cocks' legs, is one of the commonest. The great baleful magician is Koshchéy the Deathless, whose soul, in some stories, is contained in an egg far away, fearsomely guarded. Historically, his ancestry is the dread Tatar, in which figure all the previous Turanian tribes that overran medieval Russia have been confounded.

Notes will be found dealing with all such specific persons and places.

The folk-tales are very various; some classes of them can be distinguished.

The bestiary, or animal story, is common, and the parts which the beasts enact are similar to the Teutonic fairy-tales.

The semi-sacred legends of the days when Christ and his Apostles walked the earth, superficially may be compared with Grimm's stories. But the spirit is very different. To a very slight extent they are based on the Gospel. But the Russian Christ of the folk-tales is a good, just, honest peasant, with democratic sympathies, and plenty of humour. His justice is unwavering, but tempered with sound common sense. He is kind, charitable and thoroughly human.

The Saints also walk the earth. Saint George [Egóri] has taken over many Pagan legends; in one of the semi-sacred *byliny* [v. Bezsónov, *Kalĕki Perekhózhie*], he turns round the oaks and the mountains, like Vertodúb and Vertogór, and in other *byliny* of the same class the miraculous incidents of the birth of Ilyá Múromets are attributed to him. Saint Nicholas is the worker of miracles; and Saint Elias has had some of the powers of the thundergod transferred to him.

Other stories are prose adaptations of the ballads, and must be considered as such.

There are two personifications, which call for special attention, those of Death and of Sorrow. Both are borrowed from ballad cycles. Both figures appear as ghostly spirits, who persecute man, but yet can be very efficaciously and roughly handled.

There are some few satires; but the large majority cannot be readily classified. They contain the usual incidents of transformations, magic, witches, the valorous youngest son, the beautiful princess wronged by the evil stepmother,—in fact, the common Aryan stock, all tinged with the characteristic Slav temperament.

Artless as these stories are, there are a few peculiar conventions in the narration. Such are the little fore-

words, with their sardonic musings; the conclusion of almost every happy tale that the narrator was at the feast, but never might taste the viands; the references to the distances the hero must go, which the narrator has not the knowledge to estimate accurately; the reference to the land of these wonderful happenings, "the thrice ninth land, the thrice tenth kingdom"; and many other traditional stylisms.

In conclusion, it should be stated that the store of primitive folklore of the Slavs has scarcely been touched. The Slav peoples conserved primitive Aryan customs almost up to the middle of the nineteenth century; and then these were industriously and conscientiously compiled. Taking Russia alone, there are collections of magic formulas, ceremonial songs of Pagan origin, volumes of traditional ballads; and the ancient munic has also been recorded. But Bulgaria, Little-Russia, Serbia, Bohemia, and all the Slav countries have similar compilations; and every one of these nationalities is as strongly individualized, as are, say, the Danes, the Dutch, and the Germans.

These stories have been translated direct from the Russian of Afanásev; the selection is intended to represent, as completely as possible, the varieties of Russian folk-tale. As far as an analytic language, like modern English, can render so highly inflected a tongue as Russian, the translator has tried to keep strictly to the style and diction of the originals, which are the undoctored traditional stories.

THE PRONUNCIATION OF RUSSIAN WORDS

Every Russian word has *one* strongly accented syllable, which is marked with an acute accent. The vowels are to be sounded as in Italian.

Ch to be sounded as in English.

G always hard, as in '*g*ive,' '*g*ot': never as in 'gem.'

J always as in English.

Kh like German *ch*, or Scotch *ch* in 'lo*ch*.'

L when hard (e.g. before a, o, u) something like *ll* in 'pu*ll*'; when soft (e.g. before e, i) like *l* in French 'vi*l*.'

S always hard, as in '*s*o.'

V as in English: at the end of words as 'f.'

Y consonantally, as in English '*y*et'; as a vowel like 'i' in 'w*i*ll.'

Z always as in English.

Zh like '*s*' in lei*s*ure, or French 'j.'

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RUSSIAN FOLK-TALES

THE DUN COW

You know that there are all sorts in this world, good and bad, people who do not fear God, and feel no shame before their own brother.

In a certain kingdom, in a certain land, there once lived a Tsar and Tsarítsa, who had one only daughter, Márya Tsarévna. But the old Tsarítsa died and the Tsar took to him a second wife, who was a witch. And the witch had three daughters, one of whom had one eye, the next two eyes, and the third had three. The stepmother could not abide Márya Tsarévna, and sent the girl with a dun cow on to the heath, and gave her a dry crust as her only food.

Márya Tsarévna went on to the heath, bowed down to the right foot of the cow, and all at once was splendidly dressed, and had as much to eat and drink as she liked. So she guarded the dun cow the whole day, and looked as gay as any lady in the land. And at night she bowed down again in front of the right foot, and again became shabby and went home. And the bit of bread she took with her and offered it to her stepmother.

"Whatever is she living on?" the witch thought, and she gave her the same piece of bread next day, and told her eldest daughter to watch what Márya Tsarévna did.

When they reached the heath Márya Tsarévna said: "Come, little sister, I will find a cushion for your head." So she went to look, but whispered to herself:

"Sleep, my sister, sleep,
Sleep, O sister mine;
One eye go to sleep,
Close that eye of thine."

The sister went to sleep, and Márya Tsarévna stood up, went to her dear dun cow, bowed down to the right foot, and ate, and drank, and went about all day long like a princess.

In the evening she woke up her sister and said: "Get up, sister; get up, dearest; and we will go home."

"Oh! oh! oh!" he sister whimpered, "I have been asleep all day long and have not seen anything, and mother will be so angry!"

When they got home, the stepmother asked: "What was it Márya Tsarévna ate and drank?"

"I did not see anything."

So the witch scolded her, and next day sent the two-eyed sister with Márya. "Go," she said, "and see what she eats and drinks."

And the girls came to the heath, and Márya Tsarévna said, "Come, little sister, I will find a cushion for your head." So she went to search, and whispered to herself:

"Sleep, my sister, sleep,
Sleep, O sister mine;
Two eyes go to sleep,
Close both eyes of thine."

Two-eyes went to sleep, and Márya Tsarévna bowed down as before, to the right foot of the cow, and looked like a princess all day long. In the evening she roused Two-eyes; and if the stepmother was angry before, she was much angrier this time.

So next day she sent Three-eyes, and Márya Tsarévna sent her to sleep in the same way; only she forgot the third eye, and that went on looking and looking at what Márya Tsarévna did. For she ran to her dun cow's right foot, bowed down, and ate, and drank, and went about all day long splendidly attired.

And when she got home she laid the dry crust on the table. And the mother asked the daughter what Márya Tsarévna had eaten and drunk. Three-eyes told her everything; and the witch ordered the dun cow to be slain.

"You must be mad, woman," said the Tsar, "it's quite a young heifer, and so beautiful!"

"I tell you," said the stepmother, "it must be done"; and the old Tsar consented.

But Márya Tsarévna asked him: "Father, do at least give me a little tiny bit out of the cow!"

The old man gave her the piece, and she planted it; and a bush with sweet berries grew up, with little birds singing on it, singing songs fit for kings and peasants.

Now Iván Tsarévich had heard of Márya Tsarévna, went to her stepmother, laid a bowl on the table, and said: "Whichever of the maidens brings me the bowl full of berries, I will marry."

So the mother sent One-eye to get the berries. But the birds drove her away from the bush and almost pecked out her one eye; and so with Two-eyes and Three-eyes. At last Márya Tsarévna had to go. Márya Tsarévna took the bowl and gathered the berries, and the little birds helped her in the task. When she got home she put the bowl on the table and bowed down to Iván Tsarévich. So Iván Tsarévich took Márya Tsarévna to be his wife, and they celebrated a merry wedding and lived a happy life.

But, after a while, Márya Tsarévna bore a son. She wanted to show him to her father, and, together with

her husband, went to visit him. Then the stepmother turned her into a goose, and decked her eldest daughter as though she were the wife of Iván Tsarévich. And Iván Tsarévich returned home.

The old man, who tended the children, got up early in the morning, washed himself clean, took the child on his arm and went out to the field, to the bush in the field. Grey geese were flying over it.

"Geese, ye grey ones, where is the baby's mother?"

"In the next flock!"

Then the next flock came by.

"Geese, ye grey ones, where is the baby's mother?"

Then the baby's mother came to them, threw off her feathers, and gave her little child the breast, and began weeping:

"For this one day I may come, and to-morrow, but the next day I must fly away over the woods and over the hills."

The old man went back home, and the boy slept all day long, until next morning, and did not wake up. The false wife was angry with him for taking the child into the fields where it must be much too cold.

But next morning the old man again got up very early, washed himself clean, and took the child into the field. Iván Tsarévich followed him secretly and hid in the bush. Then the grey geese began soaring by.

"Geese, ye grey ones, where is the baby's mother?"

"In the next flock!"

Then the next flock came by.

"Geese, ye grey ones, where is the baby's mother?"

Then the baby's mother came to them, threw off her feathers, and gave her little child the breast, and began weeping: "For this one day I may come, but to-morrow I must fly away over the woods and over the hills."

Then she asked: "What do I smell there?" and

wanted to put on her feathers again, but could not find them anywhere.

Iván Tsarévich had burnt them. He seized hold of Márya Tsarévna, but she turned first into a frog, then into a lizard, and into all sorts of insects, and last of all into a spindle. Iván Tsarévich took the spindle and broke it in halves, threw the dull end behind him and the sharp one in front; and his beautiful young wife stood in front of him, and they went home.

Then the daughter of the witch cried out: "The destroyer and the wicked woman have come."

But Iván Tsarévich assembled all the Princes and the *boyárs*, and he asked them: "With which wife shall I live?"

They said: "With the first."

But he answered, "My lords, whichever wife leaps quickest to the door shall remain with me."

So the witch's daughter climbed up at once, but Márya Tsarévna clung on. Then Iván Tsarévich took his gun and shot the substitute wife, and lived happy ever after with Márya Tsarévna.

A TALE OF THE DEAD

One day a peasant was going by night with pots on his head. He journeyed on and on, and his horse became tired and came to a spot in front of God's acre. The peasant ungirded the horse, set it to graze, but he could not get any sleep. He lay down and lay down, suddenly the grave began opening under him, and he felt it and leaped to his feet. Then the grave opened and the corpse with the coffin lid got out, with his white shroud on; got out and ran up to the church door, laid the coffin lid at the gate and himself went into the village.

Now this peasant was a bold fellow: so he took the coffin lid and set it by his *teléga*, and went to see what would come of it. Very soon the corpse came back, looked about him and could not find the coffin lid anywhere, and began to hunt for it. And at last he came up to the peasant, and said, "Give me my coffin lid, or else I will smash you to atoms."

"What are you bragging for?" answered the peasant, "I will break you up into little bits."

"Do, please, give it me, dear good man," asked the corpse.

"Well, I will give it you if you will tell me where you have been and what you have done."

"Oh, I have been in the village, and I there slew two young lads!"

"Well, tell me how to revive them."

The corpse had no choice, so he answered, "Cut off the left lappet from my shroud and take it with you. When you come to the house where the lads have died,

scatter hot sparks into a pot and put the piece of my shirt there, then close the door and at the breath of it they will revive at once."

So the peasant cut off the left lappet from the shroud and gave him back the coffin lid. Then the dead man went back into the grave and laid himself down in it. Then the cocks crowed and he could not lock it down properly: one corner of the coffin lid would perk upwards. The peasant noticed all this. Day was breaking, so he yoked his horse and went into the village.

In a certain house he could hear the sound of lamentation and cries of grief: he went in there, and two youths lay dead. "Do not weep: I can revive them."

"Do revive them, kinsman: half of our goods we will give you," said the relations.

So the peasant did as the corpse had told him, and the lads revived. The parents were delighted, and they seized hold of the peasant, and they pinioned him with ropes. "Now, doctor, we are going to take you up to the authorities: if you can revive them it must be you who killed them!"

"What, good Christians! Have some fear for God!" the peasant shrieked: and he told what he had seen at night.

Soon the news spread through the village, and the people assembled and rushed up to the cemetery, looked at the grave out of which the corpse had come, tore it up and dug into the dead man's heart an oaken stake, so that he should never rise up and kill folks. And they rewarded the peasant greatly and led him home with honour.

A TALE OF THE DEAD

ONCE a carpenter was going home late at night from a strange village: he had been at a jolly feast at a friend's house. As he came back an old friend met him who had died some ten years before.

"How do you do?"

"How do you do?" said the walker, and he forgot that his friend had long ago taken the long road.

"Come along with me: let us have a cup together once more."

"Let us go."

"I am so glad to have met you again, let us toast the occasion."

So they went into an *izbá*,[1] and they had a drink and a talk. "Well, good-bye; time I went home!"

"Stay, where are you going? Come and stay the night with me."

"No, brother, do not ask me: it is no good. I have business at home to-morrow and must be there early."

"Well, good-bye."

"But why should you go on foot? Better come on my horse, and he will gallop along gaily."

"Thank you very much."

So he sat on the horse, and the horse galloped away like a whirlwind.

Suddenly the cock crowed: it was a very terrible sight! Graves all around, and under the wayfarer a gravestone!

[1] Hut.

A TALE OF THE DEAD

THEY had discharged the soldier home, and he was going on his road, it may be far, it may be a short way, and he at last was nearing his village. Not far from his village there lived a miller in his mill: in past times the soldier had been great friends with him.

Why should he not go and see his friend? So he went.

And the miller met him, greeted him kindly, brought a glass of wine, and they began speaking of all they had lived through and seen. This was towards the evening, and whilst the soldier was the miller's guest it had become dark. So the soldier got ready to go into the village.

But the miller said to him, "Soldier, stay the night with me: it is late and you might come by some mishap."

"What?"

"A terrible sorcerer has died, and at night he rises out of the grave, ranges about the village and terrifies the boldest: why, he might give you trouble."

What was the use of it? Why, the soldier was a State servant, and a soldier cannot be drowned in the sea, nor be burned in the fire! So he answered, "I will go, for I should like to see my relatives as soon as I can."

So he set out; and the road crossed a grave-yard. As he looked he saw a glow on one grave. "What is it?" he said; "I must look at this." So he went up, and beside a fire there sat the sorcerer, sewing shoes. "Hail, brother!" said the soldier.

So the wizard looked, and asked, "What are you doing here?"

"I only wanted to see what you are up to."

So the wizard threw down his work, and he invited the soldier to a wedding. "Let us go, brother, let us have a walk: there is a wedding now going on in the village."

"Very well," said the soldier.

So they went to the wedding, and were royally feasted and given to eat and drink.

The wizard drank and drank, walked about and walked about, and grew angry, drove all the guests and the family out of the *izbá*,[1] scattered all the wedding guests, took out two bladders and an awl, pricked the hands of the bride and bridegroom and drew their blood, filling the bladders with the blood. He did this and said to the soldier, "Now we will leave the house."

On the road the soldier asked him, "Tell me, why did you fill the bladders with the blood?"

"So that the bride and bridegroom might die. To-morrow nobody will be able to wake them up: I only know one means of reviving them."

"What is that?"

"You must pierce the heels of the bride and bridegroom and pour the blood again into the wounds, their own blood into each. In my right pocket I have the bridegroom's blood hidden, and in my left, the bride's."

So the soldier listened and never said a single word.

But the wizard went on boasting. "I, you know, carry out whatever I desire."

"Can you be overcome?"

"Yes, certainly: if any one were to make a pile of aspen wood, one hundred cartloads in all, and to burn me on the pile, it can be done; then I should be overcome. Only you must burn me in a cunning way. Out

[1] Hut.

of my belly snakes, worms and all sorts of reptiles will creep; jackdaws, magpies and crows will fly: you must catch them and throw them on the pile. If a single worm escapes, it will be no good, for I shall creep out into that worm."

So the soldier listened and remembered. So they had a long talk, and at last they came to the grave.

"Now, my brother," said the wizard, "I am going to tear you to bits? otherwise you will tell the tale!"

"Now! Let's argue this out! How are you going to tear me to bits; I am a servant of God and the Tsar!"

So the wizard gnashed his teeth, howled, and threw himself on the soldier. But he drew out his sabre and dealt a backstroke. They tussled and struggled, and the soldier was almost exhausted. Ho, but this is a sorry ending! Then the cocks crowed and the wizard fell down breathless.

The soldier got the bladders out of the wizard's pockets, and went to his relations. He went in and he greeted them. And they asked him, "Have you ever seen such a fearful stir?"

"No, I never have!"

"Why, have you not heard? There is a curse on our village: a wizard haunts it."

So they lay down and went to sleep.

In the morning the soldier rose and began asking: "Is it true that there was a wedding celebrated here?"

So his kin answered him, "There was a wedding at the rich peasant's house, only the bride and bridegroom died that same night. No, we don't know at all of what they died."

"Where is the house?"

So they showed him, and he said never a word, and went there, got there, and found the whole family in tears.

"What are you wailing for?"

So they told him the reason.

"I can revive the bridal couple: what will you give me?"

"Oh, you may take half of our possessions."

So the soldier did as the wizard had bidden him, and he revived the bride and bridegroom, and grief was turned to joy and merriment.

They feasted the soldier and rewarded him.

So he then turned sharp to the left and marched up to the *stárosta*[1] and bade him assemble all the peasants and prepare one hundred cartloads of aspen boughs. Then they brought the boughs into the cemetery, put them into a pile and raised the wizard out of the grave, put him on the faggots and burned him. And then all the people stood around, some with brushes, shovels and pokers. The pile lit up gaily and the wizard began to burn. His belly burst, and out of it crept snakes, worms and vermin of all sorts, and there flew jackdaws and magpies. But the peasants beat them all into the fire as they came out, and did not let a single worm escape. So the wizard was burned, and the soldier collected his dust and scattered it to the four winds. Henceforth there was peace in the village.

And the peasants thanked the soldier.

He stayed in his country, stayed there until he was satisfied, and then with his money returned to the imperial service: he served his term, went on the retired list, and then lived out his life, living happily, loving the good things and shunning the ill.

[1] The Mayor.

THE BEAR, THE DOG, AND THE CAT

ONCE there lived a peasant who had a good dog, and as the dog grew old it left off barking and guarding the yard and the storehouses: its master would no longer nourish it, so the dog went into the wood and lay under a tree to die.

Then a bear came up and asked him, "Hello, Dog, why are you lying here?"

"I have come to die of hunger. You see how unjust people are. As long as you have any strength, they feed you and give you drink; but when your strength dies away and you become old they drive you from the courtyard."

"Well, Dog, would you like something to eat?"

"I certainly should."

"Well, come with me; I will feed you."

So they went on.

On the way a foal met them.

"Look at me," said the bear, and he began to claw the ground with his paws. "Dog, O dog!"

"What do you want?"

"Look, are my eyes beautiful?"

"Yes, Bear, they are beautiful."

So the bear began clawing at the ground more savagely still. "Dog, O dog, is my hair dishevelled?"

"It is dishevelled, Bear."

"Dog, O dog, is my tail raised?"

"Yes, it is raised."

Then the bear laid hold of the foal by the tail, and the foal fell to the ground. The bear tore her to pieces

and said, "Well, Dog, eat as much as you will, and when everything is in order, come and see me."

So the dog lived by himself and had no cares, and when he had eaten all and was again hungry, he ran up to the bear.

"Well, my brother, have you done?"

"Yes, I have done, and again I am hungry."

"What! Are you hungry again? Do you know where your old mistress lives?"

"I do."

"Well, then, come; I will steal your mistress's child out of the cradle, and do you chase me away and take the child back. Then you may go back; she will go on feeding you, as she formerly did, with bread."

So they agreed, and the bear ran up to the hut himself and stole the child out of the cradle: the child cried, and the woman burst out, hunted him, hunted him, but could not catch him; so they came back, and the mother wept, and the other women were afflicted; from somewhere or other the dog appeared, and he drove the bear away, took the child and brought it back.

"Look," said the woman, "here is your old dog restoring your child!" So they ran to meet him, and the mother was very glad and joyous. "Now," she said, "I shall never discharge this old dog any more." So they took him in, fed him with milk, gave him bread, and asked him only to taste the things. And they told the peasant, "Now you must keep and feed the dog, for he saved my child from the bear; and you were saying he had no strength!"

This all suited the dog very well, and he ate his fill, and he said, "May God grant health to the bear who did not let me die of hunger!" and he became the bear's best friend.

Once there was an evening party given at the peasant's house. At that time the bear came in as the dog's guest.

"Hail, Dog, with what luck are you meeting? Is it bread you are eating?"

"Praise be to God," answered the dog, "it is no mere living, it is butter week. And what are you doing? Let us go into the *izbá*.[1] The masters have gone out for a walk and will not see what you are doing. You come into the *izbá* and go and hide under the stove as fast as you can. I will await you there and will recall you."

"Very well."

And so they went into the *izbá*. The dog saw that his master's guests had drunk too much, and made ready to receive his friend. The bear drank up one glass, then another, and broke it. The guests began singing songs, and the bear wanted to chime in. But the dog persuaded him: "Do not sing, it would only do harm." But it was no good, for he could not keep the bear silent, and he began singing his song. Then the guests heard the noise, laid hold of a stick and began to beat him. He burst out and ran away, and just got away with his life.

Now the peasant also had a cat, which had ceased catching mice, and even playing tricks. Wherever it might crawl it would break something or spill something. The peasant chased the cat out of the house. But the dog saw that it was going to a miserable life without any food, and secretly began bringing it bread and butter and feeding it. Then the mistress looked on, and as soon as she saw this she began beating the dog, beat it hard, very hard, and saying all the time, "Give the cat no beef, nor bread."

Then, three days later, the dog went to the courtyard and saw that the cat was dying of starvation. "What is the matter?" he said.

"I am dying of starvation: I was able to have enough whilst you were feeding me."

[1] Hut.

"Come with me."

So they went away. The dog went on, until he saw a drove of horses, and he began to scratch the earth with his paws and asked the cat, "Cat, O cat, are my eyes beautiful?"

"No, they are not beautiful."

"Say that they are beautiful!"

So the cat said, "They are beautiful."

"Cat, O cat, is my fur dishevelled?"

"No it is not dishevelled."

"Say, you idiot, that it is dishevelled."

"Well, it is dishevelled."

"Cat, O cat, is my tail raised?"

"No, it is not raised."

"Say, you fool, that it is raised." Then the dog made a dash at a mare, but the mare kicked him back, and the dog died.

So the cat said, "Now I can see that his eyes are very red, and his fur is dishevelled, and his tail is raised. Good-bye, brother Dog, I will go home to die."

EGÓRI THE BRAVE AND THE GIPSY

In a certain kingdom, in a certain land, there was a gipsy who had a wife and seven children, and he lived so poorly that at last there was nothing in the house to eat or to drink—not even a crust of bread. He was too idle to work, and too much of a coward to thieve. So what could he do?

Well, the peasant went on the road and stood pondering. At this time Egóri the Brave was passing by.

"Hail!" said the peasant. "Whither are you faring?"

"To God."

"Why?"

"With a message from men wherewith each man should live, and wherewith each man should busy himself."

"Will you, then, send in a report about me to the Lord?" the peasant said, "what He wishes me to engage in?"

"Very well—I will hand in a report," Egóri said, and he went on his road.

So there the peasant stood, waiting for him—waiting. And when at last he saw Egóri on his way back, he asked him at once: "Did you hand in a report about me?"

"No," said Egóri; "I forgot."

So the peasant set out on his road a second time, and he again met Egóri, who was going to God on an errand. So the gipsy asked him once more: "Do please hand in a request on my behalf."

"All right," said Egóri. And he forgot again.

And so once more the peasant set out on the road, and once more met Egóri. And he asked him for the third time: "Do please speak on my behalf to God!"

"Yes—all right!"

"Will you forget again?"

"No, I shall not forget this time."

Only the gipsy did not believe him. "Give me," he said, "your golden stirrup. I will keep it until you come back; otherwise, you may once more forget."

Egóri untied his golden stirrup, gave it to the gipsy, and rode on farther with a single stirrup. Then he reached God, and he began to ask wherewith each man should live, and wherewith each man should busy himself. In each case he received the right order, and he was starting back. But as soon as ever he mounted, he glanced down at the stirrup and recollected the gipsy. So he ran back to see God and said: "Oh, I forgot. Whilst I was coming here I met a gipsy on the way, and he asked me what he should do." "Oh, tell the gipsy," the Lord said, "that his trade is from whomsoever he take and steal, he, then, shall cheat and perjure himself."

So Egóri went and mounted his horse, came up to the gipsy, and told him: "I shall now tell you the truth. If you had not taken the stirrup, I should have forgotten all about it."

"I thought as much," said the gipsy. "Now, for all eternity, you cannot forget me if you only look down at your stirrup, and I shall be always in your mind. Well, what did the Lord say to you?"

"Oh, He told me from whomsoever you take or steal you will cheat and perjure yourself; that will be your trade."

"Thank you very much," said the gipsy, and he bowed down to the ground, and went home.

"Where are you going?" said Egóri. "Give me my golden stirrup!"

"What stirrup?"

"Didn't you take one from me?"

"How in the world could I take one from you? This is the first time I have seen you, and I have not even had a stirrup. Before God!—I never have!" And so the gipsy perjured himself.

What could he do? He could struggle and fight it out, Egóri could, and so he did; but it was all no good. It is perfectly true, and the gipsy spoke the truth: "If I had not given him the stirrup!—if I had not only known him! Now I shall forget him no more."

So the gipsy took the golden stirrup and began hawking it. And as he went on his way, a fine lord came and met him. "Hullo, gipsy!" he said. "Will you sell the stirrup?"

"Yes—all right!"

"What will you take?"

"Fifteen hundred roubles."

"Much too dear, isn't that?"

"Well, you see, it is all gold."

"Very well!" said his lordship; and he put his hand into his pocket, and he only had a thousand. "You just take this thousand, gipsy, and then give me the stirrup: I will send you on the odd five hundred."

"Oh, no, my lord! One thousand roubles I will certainly take, but I shall not give up the stirrup. When you carry out your part of the bargain, then you shall receive the stirrup." So the lord gave him the thousand, and he went home.

The very instant he got there he took out five hundred roubles, and sent his man up to the gipsy, telling him to give the money to him and to take the golden stirrup.

When his lordship's groom came to the gipsy's *izbá*,[1] "Hail, gipsy!" he said. "How fare you, good man? I have brought you the money from his lordship."

[1] Hut.

"Well, give it me if you have brought it." So the gipsy took the five hundred roubles, and gave the man a glass of wine, and then another, until the man had his fill.

And when he had had his fill the groom began to make his way home, and said to the peasant: "Now give me the golden stirrup."

"What?"

"Yes—the stirrup which you sold my master."

"What, *I* sold it! I never had a golden stirrup!"

"Well, then, give me the money back."

"What money?"

"But I just gave you five hundred roubles!"

"I have not even seen a *grivennik*[1]—never in my life! I looked after you kindly, simply for the sake of our Lord, and not in the least in order to get any money out of you." And in this manner the gipsy had disavowed everything.

When the master had heard of this, he instantly started out to see the gipsy. "What on earth do you mean, you vile thief, by taking money and not giving up the golden stirrup?"

"What golden stirrup? Now do, my lord, think a little. How is it possible for a grey, hoary old peasant like me to possess a golden stirrup?"

Then the master became angrier and angrier, but he could not find it. "Well, we will come to court!" he said.

"Oh, please," the gipsy answered, "please think! How in the world can I come in your company? You are a lord, and I am only a blockhead—I am only a dolt and a mere hind. At least you might dress me in a fine costume if we are to go together." So the master dressed him in his own dress, and they journeyed together to the town for the case to be tried.

[1] Ten kopeks.

When they came into the town, the master said: "I bought of this peasant a golden stirrup. He took the money for it and will not deliver the chattel."

And the peasant answered: "My Lords Justices, do you think it out for yourselves, however could one get a golden stirrup out of a grey-haired peasant? Why, I have not a single loaf at home. And I really cannot imagine what this fine gentleman wants of me. Why, he will even be saying next that I am wearing his clothes."

"But the dress *is* mine!" the master shrieked out.

"There you are, my Lords Justices!"

After this the case came to an end, and the master went back home without getting anything, and the peasant went on living merrily—living on and gaining nothing but good.

DANÍLO THE UNFORTUNATE

Good Prince Vladímir had many henchmen and serfs in the city of Kíev, and amongst them there was Danílo the Unfortunate, the noble. And on Sundays Prince Vladímir used to give all his servants goblets filled with wine, but Danílo good hard blows; and on great feast days every one was sated, but Danílo had nothing.

On the eve of Easter Sunday Prince Vladímir summoned Danílo the Unfortunate, and he gave him eighty score of sable skins, and he bade him sew a *shúba*[1] for the feast: the sable skins were not prepared, and the buttons had not been moulded, and the buttonholes had not been made. In the buttons he was bidden mould the wild beasts of the wood and to sew into the buttonholes all the seabirds.

Danílo the Unfortunate loathed the task, so he hurled it away, and he went outside. He went out on his road and way, and shed tears. An old woman came to meet him. "Look, Danílo," she said, "do not rend yourself asunder: why are you crying, Danílo the Unfortunate?"

"Oh, you old fatty!" he exclaimed, "shivers and shakes, quivers and quakes! Be off! this has nothing to do with you!" Then he went on a little way and thought, "Why did I bid her remove?" So he approached her again and said, "*Bábushka*,[2] little dove, forgive me: this is my trouble. Prince Vladímir has given me eighty score of sable skins, of which I am to make a *shúba* in the morning. If only the buttons had been moulded and the silken buttonholes sewn! But

[1] Fur mantle. [2] Grandmother.

there are to be lions moulded on to the buttons, and there are to be shepherds embroidered on to the button-holes that should have sung and warbled. How am I to set about it? It would be better for me to drink *vódka* behind the counter."

Then the old woman, with her patched skirt, said, "Oh, I am now '*Bábushka*' and your 'little dove'! Do you go to the border of the blue sea, and stand in front of the grey oak: at the hour of midnight the blue sea will boil over and Chúdo-Yúda, the Old Man of the Sea, will come out to you: he has no hands, no feet, and he has a grey beard. Take hold of him by his beard and beat him until he asks you, 'Why do you beat me, Danílo the Unfortunate?' Then you are to answer, 'I am beating you for this reason: let me see the Swan,[1] the fair maiden; let her body glint through her wings, and through her body let her bones appear, and from bone to bone let the marrow run like a flowing string of pearls.'"

Then Danílo the Unfortunate went to the blue sea, and he stood in front of the dusky oak: and at midnight the blue sea was disturbed and Chúdo-Yúda, the Old Man of the Sea, appeared before him. He had no hands, he had no feet, and his beard was grey. Danílo seized him by his beard and began to beat him on to the grey earth. Then at last Chúdo-Yúda asked him: "Why do you beat me, Danílo the Unfortunate?" "For this reason: let me see the Swan, the fair maiden; let her body glint through her wings, and through her body let her bones appear, and from bone to bone let the marrow run like a flowing string of pearls."

Very soon the Swan, the fair maiden, swam up to the shore, and she spoke in this wise:

"Is it work on your way,
Or for sloth do you stay?"

[1] Another variant, "the Fearsome Swan."

"Oh, Swan, fair maiden, I have a double task: Prince Vladímir has bidden me sew a *shúba*, and the sables are not prepared, the buttons are not moulded, and the buttonholes are not sewn."

"You take me with you, and it will all be done in time."

Then he began to think in his thoughts, "How shall I take her with me?"

"Now, Danílo, what are you thinking?"

"I must do as you say: I will take you with me."

So she flapped her wings, and she moved her little head, and said, "Turn to me with your white face; we will build for ourselves a princely house. Shake your locks, that our house may have rooms." Then twelve youths appeared, all of them carpenters, sawyers, stone-hewers; and they set to work, and the house was soon ready.

Then Danílo took her by her right hand, and he kissed her on her sweet lips, and he led her into the princely home. They sat down at a table, ate and drank. They refreshed themselves, and their hands met at one table. "Now, Danílo, go to rest and to bed; think of nothing else; it will all be done." So she laid him to sleep and herself went out to the crystal flight of steps. And she waved her pinions and she shook her little head: "My father," she cried, "send me your craftsmen!"

And the twelve youths appeared and asked, "Swan-bird, fair maiden, what do you bid us do?"

"Sew me this *shúba* at once: the sables are not prepared, the buttons are not moulded, the buttonholes are not sewn."

So they set to work: one of them made the sables ready and sewed the *shúba*, one of them worked the forge and moulded the buttons, and one of them sewed the buttonholes, and in a minute, wondrously, the *shúba* was made.

Then the Swan-bird, the fair maiden, came up and woke Danílo the Unfortunate: "Arise, my dear friend, the *shúba* is ready, and the church-bells are ringing in the city of Kíev: it is time for you to arise and to prepare for matins."

Danílo arose, put on the *shúba*, and went: she looked out of the window, stayed, gave him a silver staff, and bade him, "When you leave matins, stand on the right side of the choir as the choir leave, raise your hands and strike the sable *shúba*, and the birds will sing joyously and the lions roar fearsomely. Then take the *shúba* from your shoulders and array Prince Vladímir at that instant, lest he forget us. He will then summon you as a guest, and will give you a glass of wine. Do not drink the glass to the bottom: if you drink it to the bottom no good will befall you; and do not boast of me: do not boast that we built a house together in a single night."

Danílo took the silver staff and hied away, and she again stayed him on his course, and she gave him three little eggs, two of silver, one of gold, and said, "With the silver eggs give the Easter greeting to the Prince and the Princess, but the golden one keep and live your life along with it."

Danílo the Unfortunate bade farewell to her and went to matins. All the people wondered. "Look what a fine man Danílo the Unfortunate has become: he has made the *shúba* and he has brought it with him for the feast."

After the Mass, he went up to the Prince and Princess, and he gave them the Easter greeting, but carelessly took out the golden egg. Alyósha Popóvich saw this, the Mocker of Women. As they went out of the church, Danílo the Unfortunate struck himself on the breast with the silver staff, and the birds sang and the lions roared; and all the folk were amazed and gazed at

Danilo. But Alyósha Popóvich, the Mocker of Women, dressed himself as a sorry beggar and asked for holy alms. They all gave to him; only Danílo the Unfortunate alone said and thought, "What shall I give him? I have nothing to give." So, as it was Easter Day, he gave him the golden egg. Alyósha Popóvich took that golden egg and changed into his former garb.

Prince Vladímir summoned them all to him, all to his palace to dessert: so they ate and drank and were refreshed, and they exalted themselves. Danílo drank until he was drunk; and, when he was drunk, made boast of his wife. Alyósha Popóvich bragged at the feast that he knew Danílo's wife. Bur Danílo said, "If you know my wife you may cut off my head; and, if you do not know her, you shall forfeit your own."

So Alyósha Popóvich, the Mocker of Women, went whither his eyes might go, and he went and wept.

Then the old woman met him on his way and asked, "Why are you weeping, Alyósha Popóvich?"

"Go away, old woman with the swollen belly; I have naught to do with you."

"Yet I shall be of service to you."

Then he began to ask her, "O my own grandmother, what did you wish to tell me?"

"Ha! am I now your own grandmother?"

"O, I was boasting I knew Danílo's wife!"

"O *bátyushka*,[1] how do you know her: was there any little bird that told you? Do you go up to a certain house and invite her to feast with the Prince. She will wash herself, busk herself, and put a little chain out of the window. You take that chain and show it to Danílo the Unfortunate."

So Alyósha Popóvich, the Mocker of Women, went to the window jamb, and called the Swan-bird, the fair maiden, to dine with the Prince. She was starting to

[1] Little Father.

wash herself, busk herself, and make ready for the feast, and that moment Alyósha Popóvich seized her little chain, ran up into the palace, and showed it to Danílo the Unfortunate.

So Prince Vladímir said to Danílo the Unfortunate, "I see now that you must forfeit your head."

"Let me go home and bid farewell to my wife." So he went home and said, "O fair Swan-maiden, what have I done? I became drunk and I bragged of you and have lost my life."

"I know it all, Danílo the Unfortunate. Go, summon the Prince and Princess here as your guests, and all the burghers and generals and field-marshals and *boyárs*."

"But the Prince will not come out in the mud and the mire!" (For the roads were bad, and the blue sea became stormy; the marshes surged and opened.)

"You are to tell him: 'Have no fear, Prince Vladímir: across the rivers have been built hazel-tree bridges, the transoms are of oak covered with cloth of purple and with nails of tin. The shoes of the doughty warrior will not be soiled, nor will the hoofs of his horse be smeared.'"

So Danílo the Unfortunate invited them as guests; and the Swan-bird, the fair maiden, stepped out to her window, flapped her wings, shook her little head, and there was a bridge laid from her house to the palace of Prince Vladímir. It was covered with cloth of purple, tacked in with tacks of tin; and on one side flowers grew, nightingales sang, and on the other side apple-trees and fruits bloomed and ripened.

The Prince and Princess made ready to be guests, and they set out on their journey with all their noble host with them, crossed the first river, which ran with splendid beer. And very many soldiers fell down by that beer. Then they advanced to the second river, which ran with wonderful mead, and more than half of the brave host

bent down to drink the mead and rolled on their sides. So they came to the third river, which ran with glorious wine. Here all the officers bent down and drank till they were drunk. At the fourth river powerful *vódka* flowed. And the Prince looked backwards: all of his generals were lying on their backs. Only the Prince was left with three companions—with the Princess, Alyósha Popóvich, the Mocker of Women, and Danílo the Unfortunate.

Then the invited guests arrived, and they entered into the lofty palace: there were tables standing, and the tablecloths were of silk, and the chairs painted with many colours. They sat down at the tables: there were all sorts of dishes and of foreign drinks. There were no bottles, no mere pints—entire rivers flowed! Prince Vladímir and the Princess drank nothing, tasted nothing, only looked on. When would the Swan, the fair maiden, come out? And they sat long at the table, waited for her long, until it was time to go home. Danílo the Unfortunate called her once, and twice, and a third time, but she would not come and see her guests.

Alyósha Popóvich, the Mocker of Women, then said, "If this had been my wife I should have taught her to obey!"

Then the Swan-bird, the fair maiden, came out and stood at the window, and she said these words: "This is how we teach our husbands!" And so she flapped her wings, moved her little head, and flew about: and there the guests sat on mounds in the bog.

One way the waters tossed,
On the other lay woe,
On the third side naught but moss,
On the fourth side—Oh!

"Get up, Prince, and avaunt! Let Danílo sit at the head of the table."

So they went back all the way to their palace, and they were covered with mud from head to foot.

. . . . . .

I myself then should have liked to see the Prince and Princess; and they were just poking their heads out of the door, but, whilst it was opening, I slipped and fell down flat.

THE SORRY DRUNKARD

Once there lived an old man, and he was such a sorry drunkard as words cannot describe. He used to go to the drinking-booth, drink green wine, and crawl away home through the hops. And his road lay across a river.

When he came to the river, he did not dally to think; but slipped off his boots, hung them on his head, and wandered at ease till he came into the middle, stumbled and fell into the water, and was heard of no more.

But he had a son, Ugly Peter, Petrúsha. When Petrúsha saw that his father had vanished utterly, he became melancholy, and wept, had a Requiem Mass sung for his soul, and began to adminster the property.

One day, on a Sunday, he went to church to pray to God. As he was going on his way, in front of him there was a woman crawling along, going slowly, slowly, stumbling on the reeds, and scolding hard: "What the devil knocks you against me!"

Petrúsha heard her ugly language, and said: "Good-day, Auntie; where are you going?"

"I am off to church, Gossip, to pray to God."

"But is not it very sinful of you, going to church to pray to God, and then invoking the Unholy Spirit? You stumbled, and then invoked the devil!"

Well, he went on, and he heard Mass, and went on and on; and suddenly, from somewhere or other, there stood in front of him a fine youth who bowed down to him and said: "Thank you, Petrúsha, for your good word."

"What are you? Why do you thank me?" Petrúsha asked.

"Oh, I am the Devil, and I am thanking you because when the old woman was stumbling along and barking at me uselessly, you put in a good word for me." And he began to beseech him: "Do come, Petrúsha, and be my guest, and I will give you a reward—gold and silver—all you wish."

"All right!" said Petrúsha; "I will come."

And the Devil gave him his directions, and instantly vanished, and Petrúsha went back home.

Next day Petrúsha went to pay a visit to the Devil—went on and went on for three whole days; and he got into a deep wood—into the dreary and darksome forest where he could not see the sky. And in that forest there stood a rich palace; and when he came to the palace, a fair maiden saw him. She had been stolen from a village by the Unholy Spirit. She saw him and asked: "Why have you come here, doughty youth? Here the devils live, and they will tear you to tatters."

Petrúsha told her how and why he had come to this palace.

"Well, look you to it," the fair maiden said; "the devils are going to give you gold and silver—do not take any of it. Only ask them to give you the sorry horse on which the unholy spirits load their fuel and water. This horse is your father. When he got drunk and fell into the water, the devils instantly got hold of him, turned him into a horse, and now he serves as the beast of burden to carry their wood and water for them."

Then that same youth came forward who had invited Petrúsha to pay him a visit, and he began to entertain him with all sorts of sweetmeats and drinks. Then the time came for Petrúsha's departure home.

"As a parting gift," the Devil said to him, "I will

give you money, and a splendid horse, and you shall ride home royally."

"This is of no use to me," Petrúsha answered. "But if you will give me anything, give me that sorry jade—that battered jade which carries your wood and water."

"Whatever use is that sorry nag to you? Why, you will hardly get home on it! Why, it tumbles down if you look at it!"

"I don't mind about that; give it to me; it is the only thing I will take."

So the devils gave him the sorry jade. Petrúsha took it and led it out to the entrance. As soon as he was at the outside, he met the fair maiden, who asked: "Have you got the horse?"

"Yes, I have."

"Then, fair youth, when you arrive at your village, take the cross off from your neck and pass it round the horse three times, and then hang the cross on its head."

Petrúsha bowed down to her, and set on his way; and he arrived at his village, and did all the maiden had commanded: took his copper cross from his neck, passed it three times round the horse, and hung the cross on its head. And all at once it was the horse no longer; but, instead, became his own father.

The son looked at the father, shed hot tears, and took him into his own *izbá*.[1] The old man lived for three days without speaking, and could not unseal his tongue. After that, they lived on in all good luck and happiness.

The old man altogether forsook being drunk; and to his last day not a drop of wine passed his lips.

[1] Hut.

THE WOLF AND THE TAILOR

THIS story is a story of the past—of the days when Christ and the Twelve Apostles still walked on earth.[1]

. . . . . .

One day they were still on their road, going on a long, long road, and a wolf met them and said: "Lord, I am feeling hungry."

"Go," Christ said to him, "and eat a mare."

So the wolf went to look for a mare.

And he saw her going up and down, and said: "Mare, the Lord has bidden me eat you!"

So she answered: "Well, please do not eat me—it is not the proper thing. But I have a passport on me; only it is driven in very hard."

"Well, show it me."

"Just come near my hind feet!"

So the wolf went up, and she kicked him with her hoofs, and knocked out his front teeth, so that the wolf was thrown, at a blow, three *sazhéns*[2] away, and the mare ran off.

Back the wolf came with a petition, met Christ, and said: "Lord, the mare almost killed me!"

"Well, go on and eat the ram."

So the wolf ran up to the ram—ran up and said: "Ram, I am going to eat you—it is the command of the Lord."

"Well, come and eat me up if you will. I will stand

[1] This is a simple instance of the *priskazka* or preface to a story.

[2] A *sazhén* is seven feet.

on the hill, and will jump up into your mouth all ready."

So the wolf stood on the hill, and the ram told him to open his mouth. So the wolf went and stood on the hill and opened his mouth for the food, and the ram ran down and hit him hard with the horns on his forehead—*whack!* The wolf was knocked off his feet, and the ram went away. And the wolf got up, looked all round, and there was never a sign of the ram.

So he went up with another complaint. And he found Christ and said: "Lord, even the ram has deceived me. Why, it almost knocked me to bits."

"All right!" said Christ, "go and eat the tailor."

So the wolf ran up, and he met a tailor on the way. "Tailor," he said, "I am going to eat you, by command of the Lord."

"All right. Let me say good-bye—I should like to greet my kin."

"No, I cannot let you say good-bye with your kin."

"Well, I cannot help it—it must be so. Come and eat me up. Only at least let me take your measurements. I only want to see whether I shall slip in easily."

"All right!—measure away," said the wolf.

So the tailor went back, took hold of the wolf by his tail, twined his tail round in his hand, and began to whip the wolf. And the wolf struggled and tussled, roared and shrieked, and tore until he tore his tail loose, and he then took to his feet. So he ran away with all of his might, and he met seven other wolves. They said: "Why are you, grey wolf, tailless?"

"Oh, the tailor tore it out."

"Where is the tailor?"

"You see him there, on the road."

"All right—we will hunt after him." And they started after the tailor.

When the tailor heard the chase coming after him,

and saw that it was a disagreeable business, he scaled up a tree as fast as he could. So the wolves arrived there and said: "We will stop here, brothers, and wait until the tailor comes down. Do you, manx-wolf, stop below, and we will each of us climb on the other's shoulders." So the manx-wolf lay at the bottom, and all the seven wolves went after the others and climbed up.

When the tailor saw his ill-fate coming so near him, for they were nearer and nearer, he cried out to the top one: "It is nobody's fault, only the manx-wolf's!" So the manx-wolf was frightened, and jumped out from below and ran off. All the seven wolves tumbled down and chased after him, caught him up, and tore him to bits. But the tailor slid down the tree and went back home.

THE TALE OF THE SILVER SAUCER AND THE CRYSTAL APPLE

ONCE a peasant lived with his wife, and they had three daughters: two were finely dressed and clever, but the third was a simple girl; the sisters and the father and mother as well called her the Little Fool. They hustled the Little Fool, thrust her about this way and that and forced her to work. She never said a word and was always ready to weed the grass, break off lamp-splinters, feed the cows and ducks, and whatever anybody asked for the Little Fool would bring. They had only to say, "Fool, go and fetch this!" or "Fool, come and look here!"

One day the peasant went with his hay to the fair, and he asked his daughters, "What shall I bring you as your fairing?"

One daughter asked, "Buy me some red cloth for a sarafan." The other asked, "Buy me some scarlet nankin." But the Fool sat still and said nothing.

Well, after all, the Fool was his daughter, and her father felt sorry for her, so he asked her, "What would you like to have, Fool?"

So the Fool smiled and said, "Buy me, my own father, a silver saucer and a crystal apple."

"What do you mean?" asked the sisters.

"I should then roll the apple on the saucer, and should speak words which an old woman taught me in return for my giving her a loaf of white bread." So the peasant promised, and went away.

Whether he went far or near, whether he took long or

short, anyhow he went to the fair, sold his hay, bought the fairings, gave his one daughter the scarlet nankin, the other the red cloth for a sarafan and the Fool a silver saucer and a crystal apple. He came back home and he showed them. Both sisters were overjoyed, sewed sarafans, and mocked the Fool, and waited to see what she would do with her silver saucer and crystal apple. But the Fool did not eat the apple, but sat in a corner and whispered, "Roll, roll, roll, little apple, on the silver saucer, and show me all the cities and the fields, all the woods and the seas, and the heights of the hills and the fairness of heaven."

Then the apple rolled about on the saucer; a transparency came over the silver; and, on the saucer, all the cities, one after the other, became visible, all the ships on the seas, and the regiments in the fields, and the heights of the mountains, and the beauties of the sky. Sunset appeared after sunset and the stars gathered in their nocturnal dances: it was all so beautiful and so lovely as no tale can tell and no pen can write.

Then the sisters looked on and they became envious and wanted to take the saucer away from their sister, but she would not exchange her saucer for anything else in the world. So the evil sisters walked about, called out and began to talk. "Oh, my darling sisters, let us go into the wood and pick berries and look for wild strawberries!" So the Fool gave her saucer to her father and herself went into the wood. She wandered about with her sisters, plucked the strawberries, and saw a spade lying on the grass; then the other sisters took the spade and began beating the Fool with it, slew the Fool, buried her under a silver birch, and came back to their father late at night, saying, "The Little Fool ran away from us, we could not find her, we went all over the wood searching for her. We suppose the wolves must have eaten her up." But the father was

sorry. She was a Fool, but she was his daughter after all, and so the peasant wept for his daughter, took the silver saucer and the apple, put them into a coffer and locked them up. And the sisters also wept for her.

Soon a herd came by and the trumpet sounded at dawn. But the shepherd was taking his flock, and at dawn he sounded his trumpet and went into the wood to look for a little lamb. He saw a little hummock beside a silver birch, and on it all around ruby-red and azure flowers, and bulrushes standing above the flowers. So the young shepherd broke a bulrush, made a pipe of it, and a wonderful wonder happened, a marvellous marvel: the pipe began of itself to sing and to speak. "Play on, play on, my little pipe. Console my father, console my guiding light, my father, and tell my mother of me, and my sisters, the little doves. For they killed me, the poor one, and for a silver saucer have severed me from light, all for my enchanted apple."

People heard and ran together, the entire village thronged round the shepherd, asked him who had been slain. There was no end to the question. "Good folks all," said the shepherd, "I do not know anything about it. I was looking for a little sheep in the wood, and I saw a knoll, on the knoll flowers, and a bulrush over the knoll. I broke off a bulrush, carved myself a pipe out of it, and the pipe began singing and speaking of itself."

Now it so happened that the father of the Little Fool was there, heard the words of the shepherd, wanted to lay hold of the pipe, when the pipe began singing, "Play on, play on, little pipe: this is my father; console him with my mother. My poor little self they slew, they withdrew from the white world, all for the sake of my silver vessel and crystal apple."

"Lead us, shepherd," said the father, "where you broke off the bulrush." So they followed the shepherd into the wood and to the knoll, and they were amazed

at the beautiful flowers, ruby-red, sky-blue, that grew there.

Then they began to dig up the knoll and discovered the dead body. The father clasped his hands, groaned as he recognised his unfortunate daughter, saw her lying there slain, not knowing by whom she had been buried. And all the good folks asked who had been the slayers, who had been the murderers. Then the pipe began playing and speaking of itself. "O my light, my father, my sisters called me to the wood: they killed me here to get my saucer, my silver saucer, and my crystal apple. You cannot raise me from my heavy sleep till you get water from the Tsar's well."

The two envious sisters trembled, paled, and their soul was in flames. They acknowledged their guilt. They were seized, bound, locked up in a dark vault at the Tsar's pleasure. But the father set out on his way to the capital city. The road was long or short. At last he reached the town and came up to the palace. The Tsar, the little sun, was coming down the golden staircase. The old man bowed down to the earth and asked for the Tsar's mercy. Then the Tsar, the hope, said, "Take the water of life from the Tsar's well. When your daughter revives, bring her here with the saucer, the apple, and the evil-doing sisters."

The old man was overjoyed, bowed down to earth and took the phial with the living water, ran into the wood to the flowery knoll, and took up the body. As soon as ever he sprinkled it with the water his daughter sprang up in front of him alive, and hung like a dove upon her father's neck. All the people gathered together and wept. The old man went to the capital city. He was taken into the Tsar's rooms. The Tsar, the little sun, appeared, saw the old man with his three daughters, two tied by the hands, and the third daughter like a spring flower, the light of Paradise in her eyes, with the

dawn on her face, tears flowing in her eyes, falling like pearls.

The Tsar looked and was amazed, and was wroth with the wicked sisters. He asked the fair maiden, "Where are your saucer and the crystal apple?"

Then she took the little coffer out of her father's hands, took out the apple and the saucer, and herself asked the Tsar, "What do you want to see, O Tsar my Emperor? Would you like to see your powerful cities, your valorous hosts, your ships on the sea, or the wonderful stars of the sky?" And she let the crystal apple roll about on the silver saucer, and on the saucer one after the other all the towns appeared in their shape; all the regiments with their banners and their arquebuses standing in warlike array, the leaders in front of the lines and the colonels in front of the platoons and the sergeants in front of their companies. And the guns fired and the shots flew, and the smoke wreathed and writhed: it was all visible to the eye. Then again the apple rolled about on the saucer, the crystal on the silver, and the sea could be seen billowing on the shore, and the ships swimming like swans, flags flying, issuing from the stern, and the noise of guns and cannon-smoke arriving like wreaths, all visible to the eye. Then again the apple rolled on the saucer, the crystal on the silver, and the sky was red on the saucer, and little sun after little sun made its round, and the stars gathered on their dance. The Tsar was amazed at this wonder.

But the fair maiden was lost in tears and fell down at the Tsar's feet and begged for mercy, saying, "Tsar, your Majesty," she said, "take my silver saucer and crystal apple if you will only forgive my sisters, and do not destroy them for my sake."

And the Tsar was melted by her tears and pardoned them at her request. She for sheer joy shouted out and fell upon her sisters. The Tsar looked round, was

amazed, took the fair maiden by the hand, said to her in a kindly voice, "I must for your goodness love your beauty: will you be my wife and the Tsarítsa of my fair realm?"

"Tsar, your Majesty," answered the fair maiden, "it is your imperial will, but it is the father's will which is law amongst the daughters, and the blessing of their mother. If my father will, if my mother will bless me, I will."

Then the father bowed down to earth, and he sent for the mother, and the mother blessed her.

"Yet I have one word more for you," said the fair maiden to the Tsar: "Do not separate my kin from me, let my mother and my father and my sisters remain with me."

Then the sisters bowed down to her feet, and said, "We are not worthy!"

"It has all been forgotten, my beloved sisters," she said to them; "ye are my kin, ye are not strangers. He who bears in mind an ill bygone has lost his sight." And as she said this, she smiled and raised her sisters up.

And her sisters wept from sheer emotion, as the rivers flow, and would not rise from the ground.

Then the Tsar bade them rise and looked on them kindly, bidding them remain in the city.

There was a feast in the palace: the front steps glittered and glowed as though with flame, like the sun enwreathed in his beams. The Tsar and the Tsarítsa sat on a chariot, and the earth trembled, and the people ran up crying out, "Long live the Tsar and Tsarítsa!"

THE FOUNDLING PRINCE

ONCE upon a time there was a Tsar and Tsarítsa who had only one son. The Tsar one day had to leave home, and in his absence a disaster befell them; the Tsarévich disappeared. They searched and searched for the Tsarévich, dragging the ponds. Not a breath nor a sound could be heard of him. So fifteen years went by, until at last the Tsar received news that in a certain village a peasant had found a child who was a wonder for his beauty and his cleverness.

So the Tsar ordered the peasant to be brought to him as soon as possible: he was brought, and the Tsar began asking him where he had found the boy. The peasant explained that he had found him fifteen years ago in a corn kiln, with strange and rich clothing on him; and by every sign he was the Tsar's own son.

So the Tsar told the peasant, "Tell your foundling that he is to come to me neither naked nor dressed, nor on foot nor on horseback, neither by day nor by night, neither in the courtyard nor in the street."

So the peasant went back home, wept and told the boy. How on earth was it to be done!

But the boy replied, "That is easy enough: I can guess this riddle."

So he took and undressed himself from head to foot, put a net on himself, came on a goat, came up to the Tsar at twilight, and mounted the goat at the gate, leaving the fore-feet of the goat on the courtyard and the hind-feet in the street.

When the Tsar saw this, he became convinced and said, "This must be my son!"

THE SUN AND HOW IT WAS MADE BY DIVINE WILL

The Sun is thirty times the size it appears: looks very small because it is very high up from the earth.

The Sun has an apparel and a crown which would befit a Tsar, and fifteen thousands of angels of the Lord accompany him and deck him every day. And when the Sun wanes to the West, then the angels strip off from him that garb and crown which would befit a Tsar, and lay it on the throne of the Lord.

Three angels remain with the Sun and make him ready, and God has consigned one hundred angels to enrobe the Sun in an apparel and a crown meet for a Tsar.

And when the Sun arises from the East crossing to the West, then fiery phœnixes and the *Ksálavy* of paradise fly in front of the Sun, but first wet their wings in the waters of the ocean and asperse with their wings the Sun that he may not sear them with his golden rays.

But from the fire of the Sun the feathers even of these birds are consumed, because they are scorched away. And they again bathe in the ocean and are renewed.

For this reason the cock is a prophet, and it has under its wings a white feather belonging to the other birds.

And when the Sun wanes to the West, then the cock's feathers warp.

But when the Lord's angels take the dress and the crown from the throne of the Lord, the cock awakens, lifts up his voice, flutters with his wings, the first time

to announce the resurrection to the world and to tell the angels of the law; then to say: "O Christ, Giver of Light, look down on us and bestow on the world Thy light"; and the third time to sing: "Christ is the Life and accomplishes all things." And thus the cock sings to the light, magnifies its Creator, and announces joy to the just. Amen.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE BIRDS

In a certain city there was a merchant and his wife and their son, who was wise beyond his years; he was called Vasíli. Once all three were lunching together, and in a cage there was a Nightingale singing over the table, singing so woefully that the merchant could not bear it, and he said, "If there ever were a man who could really tell me what that Nightingale is saying and the doom he is foreboding, I should like to meet him: I would give him in my life half of my possessions, and after my death I would bequeath him many goods."

Then the little boy, who was only six years old, looked his father and mother fixedly in the eyes and said, "I know what the Nightingale is singing, only I am frightened of saying it."

"Speak out openly," said the mother and father.

And then Vasíli said with tears, "The Nightingale is foretelling that a time and season is coming when you will be my servants, when father will draw me water and mother will give me the towel to wipe my face and hands."

These words made the merchant and his wife very angry, so they decided to get rid of their child; they built a little boat, and in the dark of night, put the sleeping boy into it and let it sail into the open sea.

Just then the prophetic Nightingale flew out of its cage into the boat and sat on the boy's shoulder. Then the boat came to the sea-shore, and a ship came to meet it with all its sails spread. The master of the ship saw the boy, pitied him, adopted him, asked him questions, promised to keep and love him as if he were his own son.

Next day the boy said to his new father, "The Nightingale foretells that a storm is brewing which will break the masts and shatter the sails. You must go back to the haven."

But the master of the ship would not go. And a storm arose at once, and the masts were shattered, and the sails torn down. It was no good, what is ended cannot be mended, so new masts were built and new sails were rigged. And they sailed on further.

Again Vásya said, "The Nightingale sings that there are twelve ships coming to meet us, all pirate ships, and they will take us prisoner."

This time the master of the ship believed him, and returned to the island, and he saw the twelve bold pirates go sailing by. So the master of the ship waited as long as need be, and then sailed further.

Some time went by, not too much, not too little, and the ship arrived at the city of Khvalynsk; and, for very many years, in front of the palace of the King of Khvalynsk, a Crow, with his wife and child, had been flying and screeching, giving no rest either by day or night. Whatever they did, whatever gins they might set, they could not drive them off from the window. Small shot was not any good. And so that King ordained that at every cross-road and at all the harbours this notice should be exhibited:

> "IF ANY MAN CAN DRIVE AWAY THE CROW, WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILD, FROM THE ROYAL WINDOWS, THE KING WILL GRANT HIM AS A REWARD HALF OF HIS KINGDOM, AND HIS YOUNGEST DAUGHTER AS WIFE—BUT IF ANY SHALL UNDERTAKE THE WORK AND SHALL NOT FULFIL IT HE SHALL FORFEIT HIS HEAD."

Very many were the hunters eager to become kinsmen of the King, and all of their heads had been hewn off and hung on stakes.

Now Vasíli heard of this, went up and asked the master of the ship, "Let me go to the King; possibly I can chase away the Crow and his wife."

They endeavoured to deter him, but failed. "Very well, go. And if you come by any harm, put the blame on yourself!"

So Vasíli came into the palace, told the King, and ordered the windows to be opened in front of which the Crows were flying. He then listened to what the birds were saying, and told the King, "Your Majesty, you see that there are three flying here, the Crow, Madam Crow, and Master Crow: the Crow is disputing with his wife as to which of them the son belongs, whether to the father or to the mother; and they are asking for a decision. Your Majesty, decide to whom it is the son belongs."

The King answered, "To the father."

As soon as the King had said this, the Crow with Master Crow sailed to the right, but Madam Crow to the left.

After this the King took the youth unto himself, and he lived at the royal court and received the greatest kindness and honour, grew up and became a youth of youths, married the Princess, and received half of the kingdom as a dowry.

One day he thought he would like to journey to foreign parts and see strange lands, view the folks of the world, and show himself. So he set out to roam through the world. In one city he stayed for a night, passed the night there, got up in the morning and said he wished to wash. So the master brought him water and the mistress brought him the towel. The King's son spoke with them, and then saw that they were his father and mother, wept for joy, and fell at the feet of his parents. Afterwards he took them with him to his own city of Khvalynsk, and they lived together long, and lived to enjoy good.

BÁBA YAGÁ AND ZAMORÝSHEK

ONCE upon a time there lived an old man and his old wife, and they had no children, and what on earth did they not do to get them! How did not they beseech God! But for all that the wife bore no children. One day the old man went into the forest to look for mushrooms, and an old gaffer met him.

"I know your thoughts. You are thinking of children," he said. "Go to the village and collect one little egg from every house and put a brood hen over them, and, what will ensue, you will yourself see."

Now there were forty-one houses in the village. The old man went and collected the eggs and put a brood hen over them. Two weeks later he and his wife went to see, and they found that there were children born of the eggs, and they looked again and they found that forty of the children were fine, strong and healthy, and there was one who was a weakling.

So the old man gave them names. But he had no name left for the last, so he called him Zamorýshek.[1] And these children grew up not by days, but by hours, and they shot up fast and began to work and to help the mother and father. The forty of them used to go into the fields whilst Zamorýshek stayed at home. When the harvesting season came on the forty began making the hayricks, and in a single week all the ricks were put up. So they came back home to the village, lay down, slept, and ate of the fare God provided.

The old man looked at them and said, "Young and green, goes far, sleeps sound, and leaves the work undone!"

[1] Benjamin.

"You go and see, *bátyushka*," [1] said Zamorýshek.

So the old man went into the fields and saw forty ricks standing. "Ah, these are fine boys of mine! Look at all they have harvested in one week!" Next day he went out again to gloat on his possessions, and found one rick was a-missing. He came home and said, "One rick has vanished."

"Never mind, *bátyushka*," said Zamorýshek, "we will catch the thief: give me a hundred roubles, and I will do the deed."

Then Zamorýshek went to the smith and asked for a chain big enough to cover a man from head to foot.

And the smith said, "Certainly."

"Very well, then: if the chain hold, I will give you one hundred roubles; if it break, your labour's lost."

The smith forged the chain; Zamorýshek put it round him, stretched it, and it broke. So the smith made a second iron chain, Zamorýshek put it round his body, and it again broke. Then the smith made a third chain, three times as strong, and Zamorýshek could not break it.

Zamorýshek then went and sat under the hayrick and waited. At midnight a sudden storm rose and the sea raged, and a strange nag rose out of the sea, ran up to the rick and began to eat it. Zamorýshek bound the neck round with chains and mounted her. The mare began to gallop over the valleys and over the hills, and she reared, but she could not dislodge the rider; and at last she stopped and said in a human voice: "Now, good youth, now you can mount me, you may become master of my foals." Then she ran under the sea and neighed, and the sea opened and up ran forty-one foals; and they were such fine foals, every single horse was better than every other horse. You might go round the entire earth and never see any horses as good.

[1] Father.

Next morning the old man heard neighing outside his door, and wondered what the noise was, and there was his son Zamorýshek with the entire drove. "Good!" he said. "Now, my sons, ye had better go and hunt for brides." So off they went. The mother and father blessed them, and the brothers set forth on their distant way and road.

They rode far in the white world in order to seek their brides. For they would not marry separately, and what mother could they find who should boast of having forty-one daughters?

And they went across thirteen countries, and they then saw a steep mountain which they ascended, and there there stood a white stone palace with high walls round and iron columns and gates where they counted forty-one columns. So they tied their knightly horses to each of the stakes, and they entered.

Then the Bába Yagá met them and said: "O ye unlooked-for, uninvited guests, how did you dare without leave to tie your horses to my stakes?"

"Come, old lady, what are you complaining of? First of all give us food and drink, take us into the bath, and thereafter ask us for our news, and question us."

So the Bába Yagá served them with food and drink, conducted them to the bath, and then afterwards she asked them: "Have ye come to do deeds, doughty youths, or to flee from deeds?"

"We have come to do deeds, grandmother," they said.

"What have ye come to seek?"

"We are seeking brides."

Then she replied, "I have daughters." And she burst into the lofty rooms and brought out her forty-one daughters.

They were then betrothed, and began to feast together and celebrate the marriage.

When the evening came Zamorýshek went to look at his horse, and the good horse saw him and spoke with a human voice. "See to this, my master: when you lie down with your young wives, dress them in your clothes, and put on your wives' clothes, otherwise you will all be killed."

Then they all went and lay down, and they all went to sleep, only Zamorýshek took care to keep his eyes open.

And at midnight Bába Yagá cried out in a loud voice: "Ho, ye my faithful servants! Will ye cut off the heads of my insolent and uninvited guests?" And so the servants ran and cut off the daughters' heads.

Zamorýshek roused his brothers and told them what had happened. So they took the heads with them, put them on the forty-one stakes, armed themselves and galloped off.

In the morning the Bába Yagá got up, looked through her little window, and saw the heads on the stakes. She was very angry, and she called for her fiery shield, and leapt out on the chase, and set to waving her fiery shield in all directions to the four winds.

Whither should the youths betake themselves for concealment? In front of them there was the blue sea and behind them the Bába Yagá. And she burned everything in front of her with her fiery shield. They might have had to die, but Zamorýshek was an inventive youth, and had not forgotten to take Bába Yagá's handkerchief, and he shook the handkerchief in front, and so built a bridge across all the width of the blue sea, and the doughty youths crossed the sea safely. Then Zamorýshek shook the handkerchief on the left-hand side and the bridge vanished. The Bába Yagá had to turn back, but the brothers went home safely.

THE MIRACULOUS HEN

BEYOND thrice-nine lands, in the thrice-tenth realm—it was not in our kingdom—once an old man and an old woman lived in great need and poverty. They had two sons, who were very young and as yet of no use for field work. So the old man got up himself, and himself did all the work; he went out and looked after the labourers, and for all that he could only earn a few pence.

As he was going home one day he met a sorry drunkard, who had a hen in his hands. "Will you, old man, buy my hen?"

"What do you want for it?"

"Give me fifty kopeks for it."

"No, brother; take these few pence—that will be enough for you; you will get a pint and can drink it out on your way home and go to sleep."

So the drunkard took the pence and gave the old man the hen.

Then the old man returned home. But they were very hungry there; there was not a crust of bread. "Here," he said, as he came in, to his wife, "here is a hen I have bought you."

But his wife turned on him fiercely and scolded him. "What an old fool you are! You must have gone utterly mad: our children are sitting down at home without any bread, and you buy a hen which you must feed!"

"Hold your tongue, foolish woman; does a hen eat so much? Why, she will lay us an egg and will bring us chicks; we can sell the chicks and then buy bread."

So the old man made a little nest and he put the hen under the stove. In the morning he looked, and the hen had laid a jewel of absolutely natural colours. So the old man said to his wife, "Now, old lady; amongst other folks the hens lay eggs, but our hen lays jewels: what shall we do?"

"Take it into the city; possibly somebody may buy it."

So the old man went into the city, went into all the inns by turns and showed his precious stone. All the merchants gathered round him and began valuing the stone. They valued it and valued it, and it was at last bought for five hundred roubles.

From that day the old man went on trading in precious stones which his hen laid him, and he very soon became enriched, had himself inscribed into the merchants' guild, put up a shop, hired apprentices, and set up seafaring ships to carry his wares into foreign lands. One day he was going into foreign parts, and he bade his wife have a great heed to the hen: "Treasure her more than your eyes; should she be lost, you shall forfeit your own head."

As soon as he had gone the old woman began to think evil thoughts. For she was great friends with one of the young apprentices.

"Where do you get these precious stones from?" the apprentice asked her.

"Oh, it is our hen that lays them."

So the apprentice took the hen, looked, and under the right wing he saw written in gold: "Whoever eats this hen's head shall become a king, and whoever eats her liver shall spit out gold."

So he told the wife, "Bake me the hen for supper."

"Oh, my dear friend, how can I? My husband will be coming back and will punish me."

But the apprentice would not listen to any argument. "Bake it," he said—that was all.

The next day the old woman got supper ready, made ready to twist the hen's neck and to roast it for supper with the head and the liver. The cook twisted the hen's neck and put her into the oven, and himself went out. But in that time the two little children of the house, who were at school, ran in, looked into the oven, and wanted to nibble. The elder brother ate the head and the youngest ate the liver.

When supper-time came, the hen was put on the table, but when the apprentice saw that both the head and the liver were missing he was very angry, quarrelled with the old woman and went home. The old woman followed him and wheedled, but he still insisted: "You bring your children, take their liver out and brains, and give them me for supper; otherwise I will have nothing to do with you."

So the old woman put her children to bed, called the cook and bade him take them whilst they were asleep into the wood, there kill them and extract their liver and their brains and get them ready for supper. The cook took the children into the slumbrous forest, stopped, and made ready to whet the knife.

The boys woke up and asked, "Why are you sharpening the knife?"

"Because your mother has bidden me take out your liver and brains and cook them."

"Oh, grandfather, little dove, do not slay us; we will give you all the gold you desire, only pity us and let us free." So the younger brother filled his skirt with gold, and the cook was contented with this and he set them free.

So the boys went forth into the forest and he turned back. Fortunately for him a bitch came his way, so he took her two puppies, took their livers and brains, roasted them and gave them for supper. The apprentice was very pleased with the dish, swallowed it all,

and became neither a king nor a king's son, but simply a fool.

The boys went out of the wood on the broad road, and went whither their eyes gazed—maybe far, maybe short, they went. Soon the road divided into two, and a column stood there, and on the column it was written:

"WHO GOES TO THE RIGHT SHALL RECEIVE A KINGDOM,
WHO GOES TO THE LEFT SHALL RECEIVE MUCH OF EVIL AND OF GRIEF,
BUT HE SHALL MARRY A FAIR PRINCESS."

So the brothers considered this inscription, and decided to go in different directions; the elder went to the right and the younger to the left.

The elder went on and on, and soon came to an unknown capital city. He also saw a mass of people, only they were all mourning and sad. So he begged shelter of a poor old widow. "Will you protect," he said, "a foreigner from the dark night?"

"I should be very glad to have you," she said, "but I cannot put you anywhere, I am so closely packed."

"Do let me in, *bábushka;* I am such a simple youth, just as you are; you can find me some small space, some kind of nook for the night."

So the old woman admitted him, and they began to speak.

"Why, *bábushka*," the stranger asked, "is there such a throng in the city, why are rooms so dear, and why are the people all mourning and melancholy?"

"Well, our king has just died, and the *boyárs* have sent the town-crier out to announce that old and young are to assemble, and each of them is to have a candle, and with the candles they are to go into the cathedral, and whosesoever's candle lights of itself is to be king."

So in the morning the boy got up, washed, prayed to God, said the grace for the bread and salt and the soft bed which his hostess had given him, and went into the

cathedral. When he got there, if you had been there three years you could not have counted all those people. And he took a candle in his hand, and it lit up at once. So they all burst upon him and began to blow out his candle, to damp it, but the flame lit all the brighter. There was no help for it: they acknowledged him as their king, and dressed him in golden apparel and led him to the palace.

But the younger brother, who had turned to the left, heard that there was a fair princess in a certain kingdom who was indescribably lovely. But she was very grudging, and she announced in all countries that she would only marry the man who could feed her army for three whole years; yet every one had to try his luck. So the boy went there, and he went on his way, went on the broad road. And he spat into his little bag, and spat it full of pure gold. Well, it may be long, it may be short, it may be near, it may be far, but he at last reached the fair princess, and he said he would accomplish her task. He had no need to ask for gold, he simply had to spit and there it was. For three years he maintained the princess's army, gave it food and drink and dress.

So the time came for a jolly feast and for the wedding. But the princess was still full of wiles. She asked herself and she sought to know whence God had sent him such enormous wealth. So she invited him to be her guest, received him, honoured him. And the doughty youth fell sick, and he vomited up the liver of the hen, and the Tsarévna swallowed it. From that day gold fell from her lips, and she would not have her bridegroom with her. "What shall I do with this ignoramus?" she asked her boyárs, and she asked her generals. "He has had the idiotic idea of wanting to marry me."

So the *boyárs* said he must be hung, and the generals said he must be shot. But the Tsarévna had a better idea—that he ought to be sent to hell.

So the doughty youth escaped and once more set forth on his road. And he had only one thought in his mind, how he should make himself wise and revenge himself on the Tsarévna for her unkind jest. So he went on and went on, and he came into the dreamy wood, and he looked and he saw three men fighting with their fists.

"What are you fighting about?"

"We have three finds in the road, and we cannot divide them; every one wants them for himself."

"What are the finds? what are you contending for?"

"Look, this is a barrel: you only have to knock it, and a soldier leaps out of its mouth. This is a flying carpet: wherever you think it will take you. And this is a whip: strike a maiden and say 'You have been a maiden, now become a mare,' and she will become a mare at once."

"These are valuable gifts, and they are hard to divide. But this is the way out: I will send an arrow in this direction, and you all run after it; he who reaches it first shall have the barrel, and the second shall have the flying carpet, and the third shall have the whip."

"Very well; shoot the dart."

So the youth sent out the arrow very far. The three darted after it and ran, and they never looked up. But the doughty youth took the barrel and the whip, sat upon the flying carpet, waved it one end, and he rose higher than the forest that stood there, lower than the clouds above, and he flew whither he would.

So he went back to the forbidden lands of the fair princess, began beating the barrel, and an enormous army came out; infantry, cavalry and artillery, with cannon and with powder waggons. And the mighty host rolled on and rolled on. The doughty youth asked for a horse, mounted it, and went up to his army and

commanded it. The drums beat out and the trumpets sounded, and the army went at a pace. Then the Tsarévna saw from her rooms and was very much frightened, and sent her *boyárs* and generals to ask for peace. The good youth bade these ambassadors be seized, had them cruelly and savagely punished and sent them back to the Tsarévna, who was to come herself and ask for a reconciliation.

Well, there was no help for it: so the Tsarévna herself got out of her carriage, recognised him and swooned. But he took the whip, struck her on the back: "You are a maiden, now became a mare!" And the Tsarévna turned into a mare. He bridled and rode her, and went to the kingdom of his elder brother. He galloped at a full pace, put both spurs into her back and used a scourge of three iron rods, and the army followed him, an unbelievable host. It may be long, it may be short, at last they came to the boundary, and the doughty youth stopped, collected his army into the barrel, and went to the capital. He went straight to the royal palace, and the king himself saw him and looked at the mare and began to wonder: "What is this great hero approaching? I have never seen such a fine mare in all my life." So he sent his generals to trade for that horse.

"No, what an envious king you have!" said the youth. "It would evidently be out of the question in your city to come here with a young wife; if you are so greedy for a mare, you would certainly take away my wife."

Then he went to the palace and said, "Hail, brother!"

"Oh, I never knew you!"

So they set to kissing each other.

"What sort of barrel have you?"

"That is for drinking. How should I journey forth on the road otherwise?"

"And the carpet?"

" Sit down and you will find out."

So they sat on the flying carpet, and the younger brother shook it at the corner and they flew higher than the forest, lower than the wandering cloud, straight back to their own country. So they flew back, took a room with their father, and as to who they were they never told their father and mother. So they then thought they would give a feast to all the christened world. They assembled all the people in countless hosts, and for three whole days they gave food and drink to all without requital, without any charge. And afterwards every one began saying had any one a tale of wonder to tell; let him start. But no one would say: " We, it is said, are strange folk, but—— "

" Well, I will tell you a story," said the younger brother; " only do not talk until the end. Whoever interrupts three times is to be ruthlessly punished." So they all agreed.

And he began to tell how the two old folks had lived together, how they had had a hen which laid jewels, and how the mother had made friends with the apprentice. " What a lie ! " interrupted the mistress. But the son went on with his tale. And he narrated how they had twisted the hen's neck, and the mother again interrupted. At last the story went up to the point when the old woman wished to take away the children, and again she would not stand it: " It is untrue ! " she said. " Could ever such a thing happen ? Could ever a mother wish to be torn from her children ? "

" Obviously, it is possible. Look at us, mother; we are your children."

Then the whole story came out, and the father bade his wife be chopped up into bits. He tied the apprentice to the tail of horses, and the horses broke in every direction and scattered his bones over the fields. " Let the dog die a dog's death ! " said the old man. And he

gave all his property to the poor and went to live in his elder son's kingdom.

But the younger son smote his mare with the back of his hand and said, "You are a mare; now become a maiden!" So the mare turned into the fair Tsarévna. They made peace, became friends and wedded. It was a magnificent wedding.

I was there, I drank mead and it flowed up to my beard, but none came into my mouth.

MARK THE RICH

In a country, in a kingdom far away, once upon a time there lived a merchant, Mark the Rich; and, what with all his estates and revenues, you couldn't count them. He lived, and was merry, and never suffered the poor man to come to his door, so ungracious was he.

One day he had a dream: "Make ready, Mark the Rich, and wait. God Himself will be thy Guest!" In the morning Mark got up, called his wife, and bade her make a banquet. He covered all of his courtyard with scarlet velvet and golden brocade, and at every side-path he posted journeymen and servants to keep out all the hunger-brothers and scare them outside. Then Mark the Rich came, and sat awaiting the Lord. The hours went by, and never a guest. And then the poor heard that there was a great feast at the house of Mark the Rich. They all gathered round for the hallowed gifts; but the journeymen and servants drove them all away. But one poor beggar, bent with age, and all in rags, went up to the door of Mark the Rich. And as Mark the Rich saw him from the window, he cried out in a fierce voice: "Hi, you sluggards and louts! Eyes and no eyes? Look at the beast that is traipseing up and down our courtyard: get rid of him."

And all the servants scampered up, laid hold of the poor old fellow, and rushed him out the back way. One good old woman saw him, and said: "Come to me, you poor old beggar; I will feed and rest you." She took him in, fed him, gave him to drink, and laid him

to sleep; and thus Mark the Rich had never found the Lord for whom he was waiting.

At midnight the lady had a dream, and heard some one knock at the window and ask: "Old and righteous man, are you sleeping here to-night?" "Yes," said the old man. "In a village near by a poor peasant has had a son; how will you reward him?" The poor man said: "He shall be lord of all the domains of Mark the Rich!" Next day the poor old man left his hostess and went forth to roam. The old peasant woman went to Mark the Rich and told him of her dream.

Mark went to the peasant and asked for the baby. "Give him to me—I will adopt him; he shall grow up; I will teach him well; and when I die he shall have all my wealth." This was what he said, but his thoughts were quite different. He took the little boy, went home, and threw him into a snow-drift. "Lie there and freeze; that's the way to become master of Mark's wealth!" But that same night hunters, passing by, hunting for hares, found the boy, took him home, and brought him up.

Many years passed by, and much water flowed in the river, and one day Mark the Rich went out with those huntsmen, saw the young boy, heard his story, and spoke about him, and knew it was the same he had cast forth.

So Mark the Rich asked the youth to go home and take a letter to his wife; but in that letter he bade her poison the boy like a dog. The poor foundling set out on his road; when on his way, he met a poor man with nothing on but a shirt; but this beggar was Christ Himself. He stopped the wayfarer, took the letter, and held it for one minute, and the letter was changed in all it said. The wife of Mark the Rich was to receive the bearer with all honour, and marry him to her daughter. It was said, and it was done.

Mark the Rich returned home; and was very wroth at

seeing his new son-in-law, and said: "In the evening go to my distillery and look after the work"; whilst he secretly told the men to hunt him into the burning cauldron as soon as ever he appeared. So the boy made ready to go to the distillery; but a sudden sickness befell him, and he had to go back home. Mark the Rich waited his time, and went to see what had become of his son-in-law, and tumbled into his own distillers' clutches, into the burning cauldron!

BY COMMAND OF THE PRINCE DANIEL

ONCE upon a time there was an aged queen who had a son and a daughter, who were fine, sturdy children. But there was also an evil witch who could not bear them, and she began to lay plots how she might contrive their overthrow.

So she went to the old Queen and said: "Dear Gossip, I am giving you a ring. Put it on your son's hand, and he will then be rich and generous: only he must marry the maiden whom this ring fits."

The mother believed her and was extremely glad, and at her death bade her son marry only the woman whom the ring fitted.

Time went by and the boy grew up: he became a man and looked at all the maidens. Very many of them he liked, only as soon as he put the ring on their finger it was either too broad or too narrow. So he travelled from village to village and from town to town, and searched out all the fair damsels, but he could not find his chosen one, and returned home in a reflective mood.

"What's the matter, brother?" his sister asked him. So he told her of his trouble, explained his sorrow. "What a wonderful ring you have!" said the sister. "Let me try it on." She tried it on her finger, and the ring was firmly fixed as if it had been soldered on, as though it had been made for her.

"Oh, sister! you are my chosen bride, and you must be my wife."

"What a horrible idea, brother! That would be a sin."

But the brother would not listen to a word she said. He danced for joy and told her to make ready for the wedding. She wept bitter tears, went in front of the house, and sat on the threshold and let her tears flow.

Two old beggars came up, and she gave them to eat and to drink. They asked what her trouble was, and she needs must tell the two. "Now, weep no more, but do what we say. Make up four dolls and put them in the four corners of the room. After your brother calls you in for the betrothal, go; and if he calls you into the bridal chamber, ask for time, trust in God, and follow our advice." And the beggars departed.

The brother and sister were betrothed, and he went into the room and cried out, "Sister mine, come in!"

"I will come in in a moment, brother; I am only taking off my earrings."

And the dolls in the four corners began to sing:

Coo-Coo—Prince Danílo
Coo-Coo—Govorílo
Coo-Coo—'Tis a brother
Coo-Coo—Weds his sister:
Coo-Coo—Earth must split asunder
Cooo—And the sister lie hid under.

Then the earth rose up and slowly swallowed the sister.

And the brother cried out again, "Sister mine, come in to the feather-bed!"

"In a minute, brother. I am undoing my girdle."

Then the dolls began to sing:

Coo-Coo—Prince Danílo
Coo-Coo—Govorílo
Coo-Coo—'Tis a brother
Coo-Coo—Weds his sister:
Coo-Coo—Earth must split asunder
Cooo—And the sister lie hid under.

Only she had vanished now, all but her head. And the brother cried out again: "Come into the feather-bed."

"In a minute, brother; I am taking off my shoes."

And the dolls went on cooing, and she vanished under the earth.

And the brother kept crying, and crying, and crying. And when she never returned, he became angry and ran out to fetch her. He could see nothing but the dolls, which kept singing. So he knocked off their heads and threw them into the stove.

The sister went farther under the earth, and she saw a little hut standing on cocks' feet and turning round. "Hut!" she cried out, "Stand as you should with your back to the wood."

So the hut stopped and the doors opened, and a fair maiden looked out. She was knitting a cloth with gold and silver thread. She greeted the guest friendlily and kindly, but sighed and said, "Oh, my darling, my sister! Oh, I am so glad to see you. I shall be so glad to look after you and to care for you as long as my mother is not here. But as soon as she flies in, woe to you and me, for she is a witch."

When she heard this the maiden was frightened, but could not fly anywhere. So she sat down and began helping the other maiden at her work. So they chattered along; and soon, at the right time before the mother came, the fair maiden turned her guest into a needle, stuck her into the besom and put it on one side. But scarcely had this been done, when Bába Yagá came in.

"Now, my fair daughter, my little child, tell me at once, why does the room smell so of Russian bones?"

"Mother, there have been strange men journeying past who wanted a drink of water."

"Why did you not keep them?"

"They were too old, mother; much too tough a snack for your teeth."

"Henceforth, entice them all into the house and never let them go. I must now get about again and look out for other booty."

As soon as ever she had gone, the maidens set to work again knitting, talking and laughing.

Then the witch came into the room once more. She sniffed about the house, and said, "Daughter, my sweet daughter, my darling, tell me at once, why does it so smell of Russian bones?"

"Old men who were just passing by who wanted to warm their hands. I did my best to keep them, but they would not stay."

So the witch was angry, scolded her daughter, and flew away. In the meantime her unknown guest was sitting in the besom.

The maidens once more set to work, sewed, laughed, and thought how they might escape the evil witch. This time they forgot how the hours were flying by, and suddenly the witch stood in front of them.

"Darling, tell me, where have the Russian bones crept away?"

"Here, my mother; a fair maiden is waiting for you."

"Daughter mine, darling, heat the oven quickly; make it very hot."

So the maiden looked up and was frightened to death. For Bába Yagá with the wooden legs stood in front of her, and to the ceiling rose her nose. So the mother and daughter carried firewood in, logs of oak and maple; made the oven ready till the flames shot up merrily.

Then the witch took her broad shovel and said in a friendly voice: "Go and sit on my shovel, fair child."

So the maiden obeyed, and the Bába Yagá was going to shove her into the oven. But the girl stuck her feet against the wall of the hearth.

"Will you sit still, girl?"

But it was not any good. Bába Yagá could not put the maiden into the oven. So she became angry, thrust her back and said, "You are simply wasting time! Just look at me and see how it is done." Down she sat on the shovel with her legs nicely trussed together. So the maidens instantly put her into the oven, shut the oven door, and slammed her in; took their knitting with them, and their comb and brush, and ran away.

They ran hard away, but when they turned round there was Bába Yagá running after them. She had set herself free. "Hoo, Hoo, Hoo! there run the two!" So the maidens, in their need, threw the brush away, and a thick, dense coppice arose which she could not break through. So she stretched out her claws, scratched herself a way through, and again ran after them. Whither should the two poor girls flee? They flung their comb behind them, and a dark, murky oak forest grew up, so thick, no fly could ever have flown its way through. Then the witch whetted her teeth and set to work. And she went on tearing up one tree after another by the roots, and she made herself a way, and again set out after them, and almost caught them up.

Now the girls had no strength left to run, so they threw the cloth behind them, and a broad sea stretched out, deep, wide and fiery. The old woman rose up, wanted to fly over it, but fell into the fire and was burned to death.

The poor maidens, poor homeless doves! did not know whither to go. They sat down in order to rest, and a man came and asked them who they were. He told his master that two little birds had fluttered on to his estate; two fairest damsels similar in form and shape, eye for eye and line for line. One was his sister, but which was it? He could not guess. So the master went to both of them. One was the sister—which?

The servant had not lied; he did not know them, and she was angry with him and did not say.

"What shall I do?" asked the master.

"Master, I will pour blood into an ewe-skin, put that under my armpit and talk to the maiden. In the meantime I will go by and will stab you in the side with my knife; then blood will flow; then your sister will betray herself who she is."

"Very well!"

As soon as it was said it was done. The servant stabbed his master in the side, and the blood poured forth, and he fell down.

Then his sister flung herself over him and cried out, "Oh, my brother! my darling!"

Then the brother jumped up again healthy and well. He embraced his sister, gave her a proper husband, and he married her friend, for the ring fitted her just as well. So they all lived splendidly and happily.

THE THOUGHTLESS WORD

ONCE upon a time an old man lived in a village with his wife, and they were very poor: they had only one son. And when he grew up, the mother said to her husband: "It is full time that we secured a wife for our son."

"Well, go and see if you can bargain for a wife."

The old woman went to her neighbour and asked him if her son could marry his daughter. But the neighbour said, "No!" And she went to the next peasant, who also declined the honour. And she searched the whole village, and not a single soul would hear a single word of it. When she came back she said: "Goodman, I fear our son is born under an unlucky star!"

"Why?"

"I went through the whole village, and there is nobody who will give me his daughter."

"That looks bad!" said the husband. "It will soon be summer, and we shall not have anybody to help us at the harvest. Woman, go into the next village, as you may find somebody there."

The old woman went to the next village, went from one end to the other, went through all the courtyards and houses of the peasants, but it was all in vain. Wherever she showed her nose, she was put off. And she came back home as she had left. "No one wants to be kin with such poor folk as us!"

"In that case it is no good running oneself off one's legs. Go and sit behind the oven."

But the son was indignant, and asked: "Father, bless me, and I will go and seek my own fate."

"Where then will you go?"

"Wherever my eyes lead me!"

So they blessed him and they let him go wherever the four winds blow.

When the boy was on the road, he wept bitterly and spoke to himself: "Am I then the feeblest man in the world, and no maiden will really have me? If the Devil would only send me a bride I think I would rake her!"

Suddenly, just as though he had grown out of the earth, an old man came to meet him. "Good day, doughty youth!"

"Good day, old father!"

"What were you saying just now?"

Then the boy was frightened and did not know what to answer.

"You need not fear me. I will do you no harm, and perhaps I can help you in your need. Speak out boldly."

So the boy told him all the truth. "Oh, I am a sorry fellow, and no maiden will marry me. That is making me angry; and I said in my indignation that if the Devil himself came and gave me a girl, I would make her my bride."

So the old man laughed and said: "I can give you a bride, oh, as many brides as you like"; and they then came to a lake. "Stand with your back to the water, and step backwards," the old man told the boy.

As soon as he had turned round, and had gone four steps, he found himself under the water, in a white stone palace.[1] All the rooms were splendidly furnished and finely decorated.

The old man gave him meat and drink, and afterwards showed him twelve maidens, each of whom was fairer than the others. "Choose which you will of them. You shall have any of them."

[1] The Devil in this story is the popular myth of the water-god or spirit, The Vodyanóy.

"It is a difficult choice, grandfather! Let me have till to-morrow to think of it."

"Well, you can have until to-morrow," said the old man, and he took him into a large room.

The boy lay down to sleep and began to think which he would take. Suddenly the door opened and a beautiful maiden came in. "Are you asleep, doughty youth, or not?"

"No, fair maiden, I cannot sleep. I am thinking which is the bride I shall take."

"That is the very reason I came to see you, in order to give you counsel; for, good man, you have become the Devil's guest. So, listen to me; if you ever wish to return to the light of day, you must do as I say. If you do not, you will not leave this place alive."

"Give me your counsel, fair maiden. I shall not forget it all my life long."

"To-morrow the Evil Spirit will show you twelve maidens, one like the other. You must choose me, and look at me very carefully. There will be a patch over my right eye; that will be the sign." And the maiden told him her story. "Do you know the pope in a neighbouring village? I am his daughter, and was stolen from his house nine years ago. One day my father was angry with me and made a hasty wish that the Devil might take me. I went in front of the house and cried, and the Unholy Spirit soon snatched me on the spot, carried me here; and I have never left the place since."

Next day the old man set the twelve maidens in a row before the boy, and commanded him to choose one of them. He looked until he had seen the one with the patch over the right eye, and chose her. The old man was angry, but he had to give her up. And he therefore mixed the maidens together and told him to make a second choice. The boy hit on the same one, and after a third choice he took his fated bride.

"This has been your piece of luck. Now take her home!"

All at once the boy and the maiden found themselves on the bank of the lake, and they walked backwards until they reached the high road. The Devil wanted to hunt after them; but all at once the lake vanished, and there was no trace of the water.

When the boy had taken his bride into the village, he stopped at the pope's house. The pope saw her, and sent a servant out and asked what they desired.

"We are wandering folk, and ask for shelter."

"I have guests staying here, and my hut would be too small anyhow."

"But, father!" said the merchants, "wandering folk must be always taken in: they will not disturb us."

"Well, come in."

The boy and the maiden came in, made due greetings, and sat behind, on a corner of the fire bank.

"Do you know me, father? I am your own daughter!" She told him what had happened; and they kissed, and embraced, and shed tears of joy.

"Who is he?" said the pope, pointing to the boy.

"That is my own chosen bridegroom, who brought me back to light of day, but for whom I should have remained beneath for ever!" Thereupon the fair maiden opened her bag, and there were golden and silver vessels in it which she had stolen from the devils.

A merchant looked at them and said: "Those are my plate. Once I was dining with guests, and became rather drunk, quarrelled with my wife, and I wished them all to the Devil. And since then all my plate has vanished!"

And this was the truth, for as soon as ever the man mentioned the Devil, the Evil Spirit appeared on the threshold, gathered up all the gold and silver plate, and threw skeleton bones down instead.

So the boy got a fine bride, married her, and drove to see his parents. They had long given him up for dead, and it was no wonder; for he had been away for three years, although it had seemed to him only twenty-four hours that he had stayed with the Devil.

THE TSARÍTSA HARPIST

In a certain kingdom in a certain land once there lived a Tsar and a Tsarítsa. He lived with her for some time, then he thought he would go to that far distant country where the Jews crucified Christ. So he issued orders to his ministers, bade farewell to his wife, and set out on his road.

It may-be far, it may-be short, he at last reached that distant land where the Jews crucified Christ. And in that country then the Accursèd King was the ruler. This King saw the Tsar, and he bade him be seized and lodged in the dungeon. There were many tortures in that dungeon for him. At night he must sit in chains, and in the morning the Accursèd King used to put a horse-collar on him and make him drive the plough until the evening. This was the torment in which the Tsar lived for three whole years, and he had no idea how he should tear himself away or send any news of himself to his Tsarítsa. And he sought for some occasion. And he wrote her this little line: "Sell," he said, "all my possessions and come to redeem me from my misfortune."

When the Tsarítsa received the letter she read it through and said to herself, "How can I redeem the Tsar? If I go myself, the Accursèd King will receive me and will take me to himself as a wife. If I send one of the ministers, I can place no reliance on *him*." So what did she advise? She cut off her red hair, went and disguised herself as a wandering musician, took her *gusli*, and never told anybody, and so set out on her road and way.

She arrived at the Accursèd King's courtyard and began to play the *gusli* so finely as had never been heard or listened to for ages. When the King heard such wonderful music he summoned the harpist into the palace. "Hail, *guslyár!* From what land have you come? From what kingdom?" asked the King.

"I do not journey far in the wide white world: I rejoice men's hearts and I feed myself."

"Stay with me one day and another day, and a third, and I will reward you generously."

So the *guslyár* stayed on, and played for an entire day in front of the King, and he could never hear enough of her. "What wonderful music! why, it drove away all weariness and grief as though at a breath."

So the *guslyár* stayed with the King three days, and was going to say farewell.

"What reward can I offer you for your labour?" asked the King.

"Oh, your Majesty, give me one prisoner who has sat long in the prison; I must have a companion on the road! I wish to go to foreign kingdoms, and I have no one with whom I can exchange a word."

"Certainly! Select whom you will," said the King, and he led the *guslyár* into the prison.

The *guslyár* looked at the prisoners, selected the Tsar, and they went out to roam together.

As they were journeying on to their own kingdom the Tsar said, "Let me go, good man, for I am no simple prisoner, I am the Tsar himself. I will pay you ransom for as much as you will; I will grudge you neither money nor service."

"Go with God," said the *guslyár:* "I do not need you at all."

"Well, come to me as my guest."

"When the time shall come, I will be there."

So they parted, and each set out on his own way. The

Tsarítsa went by a circuitous route, reached home before her husband, took off her *guslyár's* dress and arrayed herself like an empress.

In about one hour cries rang out and the attendants came up to the palace, for the Tsar had arrived. The Tsarítsa ran out to meet him, and he greeted them all, but he did not look at her. He greeted the ministers and said, "Look, gentlemen, what a wife mine is! Now she flings herself on my neck, but when I sat in prison and sent her a letter to sell all my goods and to redeem me she did nothing. Of what was she thinking if she so forgot her liege husband?"

And the ministers answered the Tsar, "Your Majesty, on the very day the Tsarítsa received your letter she vanished no one knows where, and has been away all this time, and she has only just appeared in the palace."

Then the Tsar was very angry and commanded, "My ministers, do ye judge my unfaithful wife according to justice and to truth. Where has she been roaming in the white world? Why did she not try to redeem me? You would never have seen your Tsar again for ages of eternity, if a young *guslyár* had not arrived, for whom I am going to pray God, and I do not grudge giving him half my kingdom."

In the meantime the Tsarítsa got off her throne and arrayed herself as the harpist, went into the courtyard and began to play the *gusli*. The Tsar heard, ran to meet her, seized the musician by the hand, led her into the palace and said to his Court, "This is the *guslyár* who rescued me from my confinement." The *guslyár* then flung off his outer garment, and they then all recognised the Tsarítsa. Then the Tsar was overjoyed and for his joy he celebrated a feast which lasted seven whole days.

THE TALE OF IVÁN TSARÉVICH, THE BIRD OF LIGHT, AND THE GREY WOLF

THERE was once, in a certain kingdom, a certain state, where there lived Tsar Výslav Andrónovich, who had three sons: the first was called Dmítri Tsarévich, the second Vasíli Tsarévich, and the third Iván Tsarévich. This Tsar had a garden so rich that in no other kingdom was there any better, and in that garden many rare trees grew with fruits and without fruits. And the Tsar had an apple-tree which he especially loved, and on that apple-tree all the apples that grew were of gold. But it happened that the Bird of Light began to fly to visit Tsar Výslav. The feathers of the bird were all gold, but the eyes were like crystal of the East. It flew into the garden every night and sat on the apple-tree beloved of Tsar Výslav, and used to pluck down the golden apples and fly away. Tsar Výslav Andrónovich was deeply afflicted, and he called to him his three sons and said to them: "My beloved children, which of you will go into my garden and catch the Bird of Light? He who captures it alive, I will in my lifetime give him the half of my kingdom, and at my death he shall have it all."

Then his children, the Tsarévichi, said in a single voice: "Gracious lord, our father, Your Imperial Majesty, we will, with the greatest pleasure, try to catch the Bird of Light alive."

On the first night Dmítri Tsarévich went into the garden and sat under the apple-tree from which the Bird of Light used to steal the apples; but he went to sleep,

and he never heard when the Bird of Light flew up and again plucked off many apples.

In the morning Tsar Výslav Andrónovich called his son Dmítri to him, and he asked him: "Well, my beloved son, did you see the Bird of Light, or did you not?" And he answered: "Father, gracious lord, this night it did not come."

So the next night Vasíli Tsarévich went to keep watch in the garden. He sat under the same apple-tree, and sat there one hour and went to sleep so soundly that he never heard the coming of the Bird of Light, which flew on to the tree, perched on it, and plucked many apples.

In the morning the Tsar called his second son and questioned him, and he answered: "Gracious lord, my father, this night the Bird of Light did not come."

And on the third night Iván Tsarévich went into the garden to watch, and sat under the same apple-tree; and he waited one hour, a second hour, and a third hour; and then the whole garden lit up as though it shone with many fires, and the Bird of Light flew in and sat on the apple-tree and began to pluck the apples. Iván Tsarévich stole under it so warily, and seized it by its tail, only he could not keep hold of it; and had only one feather out of its tail.

In the morning, when Tsar Výslav awoke from his sleep, Iván Tsarévich went to him, and gave him the feather of the Bird of Light. Tsar Výslav was very glad that his youngest son had succeeded, although he had only a single feather; and this feather was so marvellous and bright that you had only to take it into some dark attic and it shone as bright as the red sun. Tsar Výslav put the feather into his cabinet as an article which he must keep for ever; and from that time forward the Bird of Light never flew into the garden.

Tsar Výslav once again called his children unto him and said, "My beloved sons, do ye journey forth: I will

give you my blessing. You must seek for the Bird of Light and bring it to me alive; and what I promised you before, he who captures the Bird of Light shall have."

Dmítri and Vasíli were envious of their younger brother Iván that he had succeeded in pulling the feather out of the Bird of Light's tail. But Iván Tsarévich asked leave of his father and his blessing. Tsar Výslav tried to keep Iván back, but he could not, and he let him go at his unrelaxing prayer. Iván Tsarévich received his father's blessing, took his horse, and went on his journey, journeying forth, not knowing whither he was going.

And as he went on the road and way—it may be near, it may be far, it may be high, it may be low, the tale is soon told, but the deed is not soon done—at last he reached an open field and green meadows. And in the open field there stood a stone column, and on the column these words were written:

> "Whosoever goes on straight from this column, he shall have hunger and cold. Whosoever goes to the right, he shall have health and life, but his horse shall be slain. And whosoever goes to the left, he shall himself be slain, but his horse shall have life and be healthy."

Iván Tsarévich read this inscription, and he went to the right, bethinking himself, if his horse were to be slain, anyhow he would remain alive. So he went on one day, and a second and a third day, and suddenly a fierce grey Wolf met him and said: "All hail to thee, warrior! Doughty of might, Iván Tsarévich, hast thou read how it is written on the column that thy horse shall be slain? So why hast thou ridden this way?" And the Wolf, speaking these words, cleft the horse of the young Iván Tsarévich in two and went far aside.

Iván Tsarévich wept bitterly for his horse, and he went on on foot. And he went one whole day and grew

very, very tired; and when he wanted to sit down and to rest, suddenly the grey Wolf came up to him and said: "I have pity for you, Iván Tsarévich, that you are tiring yourself going on foot. Come, sit on me—on the grey Wolf—and say whither I shall take you and wherefore." Iván Tsarévich told the grey Wolf where he wanted to go, and the grey Wolf flew off with him swifter than any horse; and, in a short time, as it might be in a single night, he conducted Iván Tsarévich to a stone wall, stopped, and said: "Now, Iván Tsarévich, jump off me—off the grey Wolf—and go through this stone wall. There is a garden behind the wall, and in that garden the Bird of Light is sitting in a golden cage. You must take the Bird of Light, but you must not touch the golden cage, or they will capture you at once."

Iván Tsarévich slipped through the stone wall into the garden, saw the Bird of Light in the golden cage, and was very pleased. He took the Bird out of the cage, and was going back, and then he thought and said to himself: "Why should I take the Bird of Light without the cage? Where shall I put it?" So he turned back, and as soon as ever he had taken the golden cage there was a clamour and a clangour in the garden as though there were ropes attached to the cage. All the watchmen woke up, ran up into the garden, seized Iván Tsarévich with the Bird of Light, and took him to their Tsar, who was called Dolmát.

Tsar Dolmát was very angry with Iván Tsarévich, and shrieked in a wrathful tone: "Are you not ashamed of yourself, young man, to come stealing? Who are you—of what land? Who was your father? How do they call you on earth?"

Iván Tsarévich answered him: "I am the son of Tsar Výslav Andrónovich, and they call me Iván Tsarévich. Your Bird of Light flew into the garden every night and stole the golden apples from the apple-tree

my father loved, and for that reason my father sent me to seek the Bird of Light and to take it to him."

"Oh, thou brave youth, Iván Tsarévich!" Tsar Dolmát cried. "I would certainly have given you the bird, but what did you do? If you had come to me, I should have given you the Bird of Light as an honour; but, now, would it be well, were I to send you into all kingdoms to proclaim how you came into my realm and dealt dishonourably? Now listen, Iván Tsarévich. If you will do me this service, if you will go across thrice nine kingdoms into the thrice-tenth realm, and will there obtain me from Tsar Afrón the golden-maned horse, I will forgive your sin, and I will give you the Bird of Light, and will do you great honour."

And Iván Tsarévich became very sorrowful, and left Tsar Dolmát, found the grey Wolf, and told him of everything.

"Hail to thee, warrior, doughty of might!" the grey Wolf said to him. "Why did you not listen to my words? Why did you take the golden cage?"

"I am guilty," Iván Tsarévich said to the Wolf.

"Well, so be it," said the grey Wolf. "Sit on me—on the grey Wolf. I will take you wherever you wish."

Iván Tsarévich sat on the grey Wolf's back, and the Wolf chased as fast as a dart and ran may-be far, may-be near, and at last he reached the kingdom of Tsar Afrón at night-time; and when he had come to the white-stoned stables of the Tsar, the grey Wolf said to Iván Tsarévich: "Get down, Iván, go into the white-stoned stables, and take the golden-maned horse; only there hangs a golden bridle on the wall which you are not to touch, or it will go ill with you."

Iván Tsarévich went into the white-stoned stables, took the horse, and went back. But he saw the golden bridle on the wall, and when his glance fell on it he took it from the hook. And as soon as he touched it there was

a clangour and a clamour throughout all the stables as though there were ropes attached to the bridle. All the watchmen woke up, ran into the stable, seized Iván Tsarévich with the golden-maned steed and took him to their Tsar Afrón.

Tsar Afrón was very angry with Iván Tsarévich, and asked him who he was, who was his father, and what was his name. When Iván had told him also of his errand, he said: "I would have certainly given you the golden-maned horse if you had asked me for it, but since you have dealt thus dishonourably with me, you must do me this service, and then I will give you the golden-maned horse with the bridle: you must ride across thrice-nine lands into the thrice-tenth kingdom and gain me Princess Eléna the Fair, whom I have for long loved with all my heart and soul, but cannot gain. In return for this I will forgive you, and give you what you sought as an honour: but if you do not do me this service I will proclaim throughout all the realms of the world that you are a dishonourable thief."

Iván Tsarévich went out of the palace and began to weep bitterly: then he came to the grey Wolf and related how it had gone with him.

"Hail to thee, brave warrior, doughty of might!" the grey Wolf said. "Why did you not listen to my words, and take the golden bridle?"

"I have been guilty before you," said Iván Tsarévich.

"Well, so be it," the grey Wolf went on. "Sit on my back, on the grey Wolf: I will take you wherever you require."

So Iván Tsarévich sat on the grey Wolf's back, and the grey Wolf scoured as fast as a dart, and at last he arrived at the kingdom of Princess Eléna the Fair, to the golden palisade which surrounded the wonderful garden; and the Wolf said to the Tsarévich: "Iván Tsarévich, slip off my back, off the grey Wolf, and go

behind on that road and wait for me in the open field under the green oak." Iván Tsarévich went as he was bidden, and the grey Wolf sat near the golden palisade, waiting until Princess Eléna the Fair should come into the garden to walk.

In the evening, when the little sun was setting fast to the West, Princess Eléna the Fair went into the garden to take a walk with all of her maids of honour and servants and attendants and all the *boyáryni*[1] around. When she came to the place where the grey Wolf sat behind the railing, suddenly the grey Wolf leapt across the grating to the garden, seized Princess Eléna the Fair, leapt back and ran away with all his might and strength. He then went into the open field under the green oak where Iván Tsarévich was waiting, and said, "Iván Tsarévich, come sit on my back, on the grey Wolf swiftly." Iván Tsarévich sat on him, and the grey Wolf scoured off with them both fast to the kingdom of Tsar Afrón.

All the maids of honour and servants and attendants and *boyáryni* ran swiftly into the palace and began to set a hunt on foot, but however many the hunters that hunted, they could not hunt down the grey Wolf, and so they all turned back home again frustrated.

Iván Tsarévich, seated on the grey Wolf's back with Princess Eléna the Fair, fell in love with her and she with him: and when the grey Wolf arrived at the garden of Tsar Afrón, the Tsarévich grew very sad and began to weep tears.

The grey Wolf asked him, "Why are you weeping, Tsarévich?"

And Iván Tsarévich answered him, "O my friend, the grey Wolf, how shall it be to me, the doughty youth, not to weep, not to be afflicted? I love Princess Eléna the Fair with all my heart, and now I must give her up to Tsar Afrón in exchange for the golden-maned horse:

[1] Countesses.

and, if I do not give her up, then Tsar Afrón will dishonour me throughout all the kingdoms."

"I have served you well, Iván Tsarévich," the grey Wolf replied, "and I will serve you yet this service. Listen, Iván Tsarévich, I will turn myself into the fair Princess Eléna, and you will take me to Tsar Afrón and be given the golden-maned horse: he will then take me as his queen, and when you sit on the golden-maned horse and you ride far away, then I will ask Tsar Afrón leave to walk in the open field, and when he lets me go with the maids of honour and servants and serving-maids and attendants and the *boyáryni*, then think of me, and I shall be with you once again."

His speech finished, the grey Wolf struck the grey earth and he turned himself into Princess Eléna.

Iván Tsarévich took the grey Wolf and went into the palace of Tsar Afrón together with the supposed Eléna the Fair. Then the Tsar was very joyous in his heart that he had received such a treasure, which he had been desiring for long, and he gave the golden-maned horse to Iván Tsarévich. Iván Tsarévich sat on the horse, and he went behind the town and he placed Eléna the Fair on it, and they went away, taking their road to the kingdom of Tsar Dolmát.

The grey Wolf stayed one day with Tsar Afrón, and a second day and a third in the stead of fair Princess Eléna. And then he asked leave of Tsar Afrón to go and walk in the open field, that he might drive out the ravening sorrow from his heart. Then Tsar Afrón said to him: "O my fair Queen Eléna, I will do anything for you," and he promptly bade the maids of honour, the servants, the attendants and the *boyáryni* to go with him and the fair Princess into the open field to walk.

Iván Tsarévich went on his way and rode with Eléna the Fair, and they had almost forgotten the grey Wolf,

when he suddenly recollected: "Oh, where is my grey Wolf?"

Then, from some source unknown, he stood in front of Iván Tsarévich and said, "Sit on me, Iván Tsarévich, on the grey Wolf, and the fair Princess can go on the golden-maned steed."

Iván Tsarévich sat on the grey Wolf, and so they went on to the realm of Tsar Dolmát, may-be far or near; and when they reached that kingdom then they stopped three versts out of the town, and Iván began to beseech the grey Wolf: "Listen to me, my beloved friend, the grey Wolf; you have served me so many services, serve me a last: can you not turn yourself into the golden-maned horse?"

Then the grey Wolf struck the grey earth and became the golden-maned horse; and Iván Tsarévich left the Fair Eléna in the green meadow, sat on the grey Wolf and went into the palace to Tsar Dolmát; and as soon as ever Tsar Dolmát saw Iván Tsarévich, that he was riding the golden-maned horse, he came out of his palace, met the Tsarévich in the open courtyard, kissed him on his smooth cheeks, took him by his right hand and led him into the white-stoned palace. Tsar Dolmát for such a joy bade a feast be prepared, and they sat at the oaken tables by the chequered table-cloths, and they ate, drank and made merry for two days. On the third day Tsar Dolmát delivered to Iván the Bird of Light with the golden cage. The Tsarévich took the golden Bird, went outside the town, sat on the golden-maned horse together with the Princess Eléna, and went back to his own country.

Tsar Dolmát thought the next day he would take his golden-maned horse into the open fields, and as soon as ever he had angered the horse, it reared and was turned into a great grey Wolf who raced off.

When it came up with Iván Tsarévich it said, "Sit

on me, on the grey Wolf, and Princess Eléna the Fair she can ride on the golden-maned horse."

Iván Tsarévich sat on the grey Wolf and they went a third journey. Soon the grey Wolf took Iván Tsarévich to the place where he had cleft his horse in two, and said: "Now, Iván Tsarévich, I have served you well, faithfully and truly: on this spot I cleft your horse in two, and up to this spot I have brought you again: slip off me, off the grey Wolf; now you have your golden-maned horse, I can serve you no more."

The grey Wolf spoke these words and went into the forest; and Iván Tsarévich wept bitterly for the grey Wolf, and went on his road with the fair Eléna on the golden-maned horse. And before he reached his own kingdom and when he was only twenty *versts* off, he stopped, got off his horse, and together with the fair Eléna went under a tree: he tied the golden-maned horse to that same tree, and he took the cage with the Bird of Light with him; and lying on the grass engaged in loving conversations they went to sleep.

Now it happened at this time that the brothers of Iván Tsarévich, Dmítri and Vasíli, were riding out in different states and could not find the Bird of Light. They were just returning to their kingdom with empty hands, and they were provoked. And they lit upon their sleeping brother with the fair Princess Eléna. When they saw the golden-maned horse and the Bird of Light in the golden cage on the grass they were delighted, and thought that they would slay their brother Iván Tsarévich. Dmítri took his sword out of his sheath and cleft Iván Tsarévich, and then he roused the fair Princess Eléna and began to ask her: "Fair maiden, from what kingdom art thou, who was thy father, how do they call thee on earth?"

And the fair Princess Eléna, seeing Iván Tsarévich dead, was sore afraid, and with bitter tears spake. "I

am Princess Eléna the Fair; and Iván Tsarévich found me, whom ye have slain, whom ye have given over to an evil death: if ye were good champions, ye would have gone with him into the open field and have slain him in fair fight. But ye have slain him in his sleep, and how shall ye receive praise? Is not a man asleep as one dead?"

Then Dmítri Tsarévich put his sword to the breast of fair Princess Eléna: "Listen, Eléna the Fair, you are now in our hands: we will take you to our father, Tsar Výslav Andrónovich, and you are to tell him that we found you and the Bird of Light and the golden-maned steed. If you do not say this, we will slay you at once."

Princess Eléna the Fair was frightened to death, and swore by all the holy relics that she would do as she was bidden. Then Dmítri Tsarévich and Vasíli Tsarévich began to cast lots who should have the fair Princess Eléna and who should have the golden-maned horse, and the lot fell that the fair Princess Eléna should belong to Vasíli and the horse to Dmítri.

Iván Tsarévich lay down dead on that spot for thirty days, and in that time the grey Wolf ran up to him and he recognised Iván Tsarévich by his breath, and he wished to help him and revive him, but he did not know how. Then at that time he saw a crow and two nestlings flying round the body, who wished to land there and to eat the flesh of Iván Tsarévich. The grey Wolf sprang from behind the bush, laid hold of one of the nestlings and was going to tear it in two. Then the crow flung himself on earth and sat not far from the grey Wolf on the fields. "Don't touch my child; it has not done you any harm!"

"Listen, Vóron Vóronovich: I will not touch your son if you will do me a service; to fly across thrice-nine lands into the thrice-tenth realm and bring me the waters of Life and Death."

Then the crow said, " Grey Wolf, I will do this service ; only do not touch my son." And the crow spoke these words and flew away.

On the third day the crow flew back and brought with him two phials : in one was the water of Life and in the other the water of Death. And he gave these to the grey Wolf ; and the grey Wolf took the phials, cut the nestling into two, sprinkled him with the dead water, and the nestling grew together ; then he sprinkled him with the water of Life, and the nestling shook himself and flew away.

Then the grey Wolf sprinkled Iván Tsarévich with the water of Death, and his body clove together ; and he sprinkled him then with the water of Life, and Iván Tsarévich stood up alive and said : " Oh, what a long sleep I have had ! "

And the grey Wolf said to him, " Yes, Iván Tsarévich, you might have slept for ever if I had not been here : for your brothers have plundered you, and they have taken Princess Eléna the Fair and the golden-maned horse and the Bird of Light with them. Now listen, and return to your kingdom as fast as you can : your brother Vasíli is to-day going to marry your bride, Princess Eléna the Fair. You must hasten there as fast as possible. Sit on me, on the grey Wolf, and I will take you there."

Iván Tsarévich sat on the grey Wolf, and the Wolf ran with him into the kingdom of Tsar Výslav Andrónovich, and, whether it be long or whether it be far or whether it be near, they reached the town. Ivan Tsarévich slipped off the grey Wolf and went into the town and arrived at the palace, and waited until his brother had returned with the Princess from the crowning ; and they were sitting down at table.

When Eléna the Fair saw Iván Tsarévich, she jumped up at once from her chair and began to kiss his sweet

lips and to cry out, "O my beloved bridegroom, Iván Tsarévich: this is he, and not that other who sits at table."

Then Tsar Výslav Andrónovich stood up from his place and began to ask, and began to question the Princess Eléna the Fair what this might mean. Then the fair Princess told him all the real truth, how it had been.

Tsar Výslav Andrónovich was then very wroth with Dmítri and Vasíli and sent them into the darkness of the dungeon. Iván Tsarévich married Princess Eléna the Fair and lived with her friendlywise and lovingly, so that one might never be seen anywhere without the other.

THE PRIEST WITH THE ENVIOUS EYES

THERE was once a priest who lived in the parish of St. Nicholas. He served St. Nicholas for some years, and all his earnings were that he had neither house nor home, nor a roof over his head. So our good priest got together all his keys, and seeing the icon of St. Nicholas, struck it down, and left his parish to go whithersoever his eyes should guide him. And he went roaming on his way.

Suddenly an unknown man met him. "How do you do, good man?" he said to the pope.[1] "Whither are you going? and whence do you come?" "Take me with you as a companion." So they went off together. They went on some *versts*, and became tired. It was time to rest.

Now the pope had two biscuits, and his new friend had two wafers. The pope said to him: "We will first of all eat up your wafers, and we will then go on with the biscuits."

"All right!" the unknown man said to him. "Let us first eat up my wafers, and leave your biscuits for a dessert."

So they ate the wafers, ate them all up, and they were fully sated, and there were still wafers over.

So the pope became envious. "Why," he thought, "I will steal them." The old man lay down to sleep after dinner, and the pope was all agog to see how he could steal those wafers. The old man went to sleep; so the pope abstracted the wafers from his pocket and silently began eating them.

[1] Village priest.

The old man woke up and felt for his wafers, and could not find them anywhere. "Where are my wafers? Who has eaten them up? Have you, pope?"

"No, I did not," answered the pope.

"Well, all right; I don't mind."

So they shook themselves up, and they went on their way and journey, went on and on, and the roads suddenly divided and they came to a carfax. So they both went on a single road and arrived at a kingdom. Now, in this kingdom the Tsar's daughter was near her death, and the Tsar had promised any one who should cure her half of his reign and rule and realm; but any one who failed was to have his head cut off and placed on a pole.

When they arrived in front of the Tsar's courtyard, they got themselves up finely, and they called themselves doctors. The henchmen sallied out of the Tsar's courtyard, and asked them: "What sort of people are you? What is your race? What is your city? What do you require?"

"We," they answered, "are doctors, and we can cure the Tsarévna."

"Well, if you are doctors, come into the palace."

So they went into the palace, looked at the Tsarévna, asked for special huts from the Tsar, for a can of water, for a curved sabre, and a large table. The Tsar gave them all they required.

They then locked themselves up in the huts, tied the princess down on the big table, cut her up with the curved sabre into little bits, put them all into the cauldron, washed them, and rinsed them out. Then they began to put them together—bit by bit, fragment by fragment. And the old man breathed on them. Piece clove to piece, and made one. Then he took all the pieces, breathed on them for the last time, and the princess trembled all over, and woke alive and well.

The Tsar himself came into their hut. "In the

Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!"

"Amen!" they answered.

"Have you cured the Tsarévna?" asked the Tsar.

"Yes," the doctors answered—"there she is!" The Tsarévna came out with the Tsar alive and well.

The Tsar said to the doctors: "What good thing do you desire—gold or silver? Ask and you shall have." So they began to bring gold and silver. And the old man took as much as he could take with his thumb and two fingers, but the pope took it by handfuls, and he rammed it all into his wallet and hid it away, concealed it, lifted it up as much as ever his power could.

The old man then said to the pope: "Let us bury all the money in the earth and again go a-healing."

So they went on and went on, and they arrived at another kingdom in which there also was a princess on the verge of death, and the Tsar promised any one who should cure her half of his realm and rule and reign; but any one who failed was to have his head cut off.

But the Evil One was tempting the envious pope—how he should manage to tell nothing to the old man, but to cure her by himself, and so get all the gold and silver for himself. So he dubbed himself a doctor, arrayed himself finely, and arrived at the Tsar's courtyard, just as they had done before. In the same way he asked for the same implements from the Tsar, shut himself up in the special hut, tied the princess down on the table, took out the curved sabre; and however much the Tsarévna might cry out and wriggle, the pope disregarded all her shrieks, and all her yelpings, poor girl, and cut her to bits like mincemeat. He then cut it all up fine, threw it into the cauldron, washed it and rinsed it, took it out, put piece to piece exactly the same as the old man had done. And he then wanted to put them altogether, breathed on them—and nothing hap-

pened! He pumped his lungs out, but nothing happened. It was all to no purpose. So he put all the fragments back into the water, rinsed and scoured them through, fitting the pieces together, and breathed on them. It was all of no good.

"Oh, whatever shall I do?" the pope thought. "This is simply horrible!"

In the morning the Tsar went to him and saw that the doctor had had no luck. He had mixed up the whole body on the floor. So the Tsar ordered the doctor to the gallows.

The pope then began to beg. "Tsar! Tsar! I am a free man. Give me a short space of time. I will go and look out for another old man who can really cure the Tsarévna." So the pope went to look for the old man, found him, and said: "Old man, I am a depraved sinner. The fiends tempted me. I wanted to cure the Tsar's daughter all by myself, and I was not able, and they are now going to hang me. Do come and help me!"

So the old man went with the pope, and the noose was put round the pope's neck. Then the old man said to the pope: "Pope, who ate up my wafers?"

"I really didn't; I swear I didn't!"

So they made him mount one rung higher, and again the old man said to him: "Pope, who ate my wafers up?"

"I really didn't; I swear I didn't!"

So he went up the third rung, and again said he didn't. This time he had his head in the noose tight, and still he said: "I did nothing of the sort!"

So the old man said to the Tsar: "I am a free man. Will you let me cure the Tsarévna, and if I do not succeed, have a second noose got ready for my neck: one for me and one for the pope."

Then the old man took the morsels of the Tsarévna's

body, bit by bit, breathed on them, and she arose alive and well.

Then the Tsar rewarded them both with gold and silver.

"Now let us go and divide the money," said the old man.

So they started. They put all the money into three little piles, and the pope looked on, and said: "What do you mean? There are only two of us. Who is to have the third?"

Said the old man: "That is for the thief who ate up my wafers."

"Oh, it was I who ate them up!" the pope cried out. "I really did! I swear it!"

"Then you may have all the money, and my own share as well. Henceforth serve your parish faithfully. Do not be a miser, and do not beat St. Nicholas on the shoulders with the keys!" the old man said, and vanished.

THE SOLDIER AND DEATH

ONCE upon a time there was a soldier who had served God and the Great Sovereign for twenty-five whole years, and had only in the end earned three biscuits, and was journeying back home. And, as he went along, he thought: "Lord! here am I; I have served my Tsar for twenty-five years, have received my food and dress, and what have I lived for after all? I am cold and hungry, and have only three biscuits to eat." So he pondered and thought, and decided to desert and run away whither his eyes might lead him.

As he went along he met a poor beggar who asked alms of him. The soldier gave him one biscuit, and kept two. And, as he trudged on, he soon came across another poor beggar, who bowed down low and asked for alms. So the soldier gave him another biscuit, and had only one left. Again on he went, and met a third beggar. The old fellow bowed low and asked for alms. The soldier got his last biscuit out, and thought: "If I give him the whole, I shall have none left; if I give half, why, this old man will come across brother-beggars, will see they have a whole biscuit, and be offended. Better let him have it all, and I shall get on somehow." So he gave his last biscuit, and had nothing left.

Then the old man asked him: "Tell me, good man, what do you wish? Of what have you need? I will help you."

"God bless you!" the soldier answered. "How should I take anything of you?—you are old and poor."

"Don't think of my poverty," he replied. "Just say

what you would like, and I will requite you according to your own goodness."

"I want nothing; but, if you have any cards, give me some as a keepsake."

For the old man was Christ Himself walking on earth in a beggar's guise. The old man put his hand into his breast and drew out a pack of cards, saying: "Take them. With whomsoever you play, you will win the game; and here you have a nosebag. Whatever you meet on the way, whether wild beast or bird that you would like to catch, just say to it: 'Jump in here, beast or bird!' and your wish will be carried out."

"Thank you!" said the soldier, took the cards and the nosebag, and fared forth.

He went on and on, may-be far, may-be near, may-be short, may-be long, and arrived at a lake, on which three wild geese were swimming. Then the soldier suddenly remembered the nosebag and thought: "I'll just test this nosebag"; took it out, opened it, and said: "Hi! you wild geese, fly into my nosebag!" No sooner uttered than the geese flew straight up from the lake into the bag. The soldier grabbed the bag, tied it up, and went on his way.

He travelled on and on and came to a town. He entered an eating-house and told the inn-keeper: "Take this goose and cook it for my supper, and I will give you another goose for your pains. Change me this third one for vódka." So there the soldier sat like a lord in the inn, at his ease, drinking wine and feasting on roast goose.

It occurred to him suddenly he might peer out of the window, and he saw opposite a big palace, but not one pane of glass was whole. "What is this?" he asked the inn-keeper. "What is this palace? Why does it stand empty?"

"Why, don't you know?" the master replied. "Our

Tsar built himself this palace, but cannot inhabit it; and, for seven years, it has been standing empty. Some unholy power drives every one out of the place. Every night an assemblage of devils meets there, make a row, dance, play cards, and perpetrate every sort of vileness!"

So off the soldier went to the Tsar. "Your Imperial Majesty," quoth he, "please let me spend one night in your empty palace!"

"What do you mean, fellow?" said the Tsar. "God bless you; but there have been some dare-devils like you who passed a night in this palace, and not one emerged alive!"

"Well, still, a Russian soldier cannot drown in water, or burn in fire. I served God and the Great Sovereign five-and-twenty years, and never died of it; and, for one night's service for you, I am to die! No!"

"But I tell you: a man enters the palace at night alive, and only his bones are found there in the morning!"

But the soldier stood firm: he must be admitted into the palace.

"Well," said the Tsar, "go, and God help you. Stay the night there if you will; you are free, and I won't hinder you!"

So the soldier marched into the palace, and settled himself down in the biggest saloon, took his knapsack off and his sabre, put the knapsack in a corner and the sabre on a hand-peg, sat down on a chair, put his hand into his pocket for his tobacco-pouch, lit his pipe, and smoked at his ease. Then about midnight, I don't know where from, hordes of devils, seen and unseen, scurried up, and made such a turmoil and row, and set up a dance with wild music. "What, you here, discharged soldier!" all the devils began yelling. "Welcome! Will you play cards with us?"

"Certainly; here I have a set ready. Let's start!"

He took them out and dealt round. They began,

played a game out, and the soldier won; another, and the same luck; and all the finessing of the devils availed them nothing; the soldier won all the money, and raked it all together.

"Stop, soldier," the devils said. "We still have sixty ounces of silver and forty of gold. We'll stake them on the last game." And they sent a little devil-boy to fetch the silver.

So a new game commenced; and then the little devil had to pry in every nook and come back and tell the old devil: "It's no use, grandfather—we have no more."

"Off you go; find some gold!" And the urchin went and hunted up gold from everywhere, turned an entire mine inside out and still found nothing: the soldier had played everything away.

The devils got angry at losing all their money, and began to assault the soldier, roaring out: "Smash him up, brothers! Eat him up!"

"We'll see who'll have the last word if it comes to eating," said the soldier, shook the nosebag open, and asked, "What is this?"

"A nosebag," said the devils.

"Well, in you all go, by God's own spell!" And he collected them all together—so many you couldn't count them all! Then the soldier buckled the bag tightly, hung it on a peg, and lay down to sleep.

In the morning the Tsar sent for all his folks. "Come up to me and inform me how does it stand with the soldier. If the unholy powers have destroyed him, bring me his little bones."

So off they went and entered the palace, and there saw the soldier trudging up and down gaily in the rooms and smoking his pipe. "Well, how are you, discharged soldier? We never expected to see you again alive. How did you pass the night? What kind of bargain did you make with the devils?"

"What devils! Just come and look what a lot of gold and silver I won off them. Look, what piles of it!" And the Tsar's servants looked and were amazed. And the soldier told them: "Bring me two smiths as fast as you can. Tell them to bring an iron anvil and a hammer."

Off they went helter-skelter to the smiths, and the matter was soon arranged.

The smiths arrived with iron anvil and with heavy hammers.

"Now," said the soldier, "take this nosebag and beat it hard after the ancient manner of smiths."

So the smiths took the nosebag, and they began to whisper to each other: "How fearfully heavy it is! The devil must be in it."

The devils shrieked in answer: "Yes, we are there, father—yes, we are there! Kinsmen, help us!"

So the smiths instantly laid the nosebag on the iron anvil, and they began to knock it about with their hammers as though they were hammering iron.

Very soon the devils saw that they could not possibly stand such treatment, and they began to shriek: "Mercy on us!—mercy on us! Let us out, discharged soldier, into the free world.. Unto all eternity we will not forget you, and into this palace never a devil shall enter again. We will forbid everybody—all of them—and drive them all a hundred *versts* away."

So the soldier bade the smiths stop, and as soon as he unbuckled the nosebag the devils rushed out, and flew off, without looking, into the depths of hell—into the abysses of hell. But the soldier was no fool; and as they were flying out he laid hold of one old devil—laid hold of him tight by his paw. "Come along," he said; "give me some written undertaking that you will always serve me faithfully."

The unholy spirit wrote him out this undertaking in his own blood, gave it him, and took to his heels.

All the devils ran away into the burning pitch, and got away as fast as they could with all their infernal strength, both the old ones and the young ones; and henceforth they established guards all round the burning pit and issued stern ordinances that the gates be constantly guarded, in order that the soldier and the nosebag might never draw near.

The soldier came to the Tsar, and he told him some kind of tale how he had delivered the palace from the infernal visitation.

"Thank you," the Tsar answered. "Stay here and live with me. I will treat you as if you were my brother."

So the soldier went and stayed with the Tsar, and had a sufficiency of all things, simply rolled in riches, and he thought it was time he should marry. So he married, and one year later God gave him a son. Then this boy fell into such a fearful illness—so terrible that there was nobody who could cure it—and it was beyond the skill of the physicians; there was no understanding of it. The soldier then thought of the old devil and of the undertaking he had given him, and how it had run in the undertaking: "I shall serve you eternally as a faithful servant." And he thought and said: "What is my old devil doing?"

Suddenly the same old devil appeared in front of him and asked: "What does your worship desire?"

And the soldier answered: "My little boy is very ill. Do you know how to cure him?"

So the devil fumbled in his pocket, got out a glass, poured cold water into it, and put it over the head of the sick child, and told the soldier: "Come here, look into the water." And the soldier looked at the water; and the devil asked him: "Well, what do you see?"

"I see Death standing at my son's feet."

"Well, he is standing at his feet; then he will survive. If Death stands at his head, then he cannot live another

day." So the devil took the glass with the water in it and poured it over the soldier's son, and in that same minute the son became well.

"Give me this glass," the soldier said, "and I shall never trouble you for anything more." And the devil presented him with the glass, and the soldier returned him the undertaking.

Then the soldier became an enchanter, and set about curing the *boyárs* and the generals. He would go and look at the glass, and instantly he knew who had to die and who should recover. Now, the Tsar himself became ill, and the soldier was called in. So he poured cold water into the glass, put it at the Tsar's head, and saw that Death was standing at the Tsar's head.

The soldier said: "Your Imperial Majesty, there is nobody in the world who can cure you. Death is standing at your head, and you have only three hours left of life."

When the Tsar heard this speech, he was furious with the soldier. "What, what!" he shrieked at him. "You who have cured so many *boyárs* and generals, cannot do anything for me! I shall instantly have you put to death."

So the soldier thought and thought what he should do. And he began to beseech Death. "O Death," he said, "give the Tsar my life and take me instead, for it doesn't matter to me whether I live or die; for it is better to die by my own death than to suffer such a cruel punishment."

And he looked in the glass, and saw that Death was standing at the Tsar's feet. Then the soldier took the water and sprinkled the Tsar, and he recovered completely. "Now, Death," said the soldier, "give me only three hours' interval in order that I may go home and say farewell to my wife and my son."

"Well, you may have three hours. Go," Death replied.

So the soldier went away home, lay down on his bed, and became very ill.

And when Death was standing very near him, she said, "Now, discharged soldier, say good-bye quickly—you have only three minutes left to live in the bright world."

So the soldier stretched himself out, took his nosebag from under his head, opened it, and asked: "What is this?"

Death answered: "A nosebag."

"Well, if it is a nosebag, then jump into it!"

And Death instantly jumped straight into the bag. And the soldier, ill as he was, jumped up from his bed, buckled the nosebag together firmly, very tightly, threw it on his shoulder, and went into the Bryánski Woods, the slumbrous forest. And he went there, and he hung this bag on the bitter aspen, on the very top twig, and he went back home.

From that day forward nobody died in that kingdom: they were born, and they kept on being born, and they never died. And very many years went by, and the soldier never took his nosebag down. One day he happened to go into the town. He went, and on his way he met such an old, old lady, so old that on whichever side the wind blew, she inclined. "Oh, what an old lady!" the soldier said. "Why, it is almost time she died."

"Yes, father," the old dame replied. "The time has come and gone long since. At the time when you put Death into the nosebag I had only one hour left in which to live in the white world. I should be very glad to have some rest; but unless I die, earth will not take me up; and you, discharged soldier, are guilty of an unforgivable sin in God's eyes. For there is no single soul left on earth who is tortured as I am."

Then the soldier stayed and began to think. "Yes, yes; it would be better to let Death out; perhaps I, too, might die. And beyond this, too, I have many sins

on my conscience. Thus it is better now whilst I am still strong and I bear pain on this earth; for when I shall become very old then it will be all the worse for me to suffer anything."

So he got up and he went up into the Bryánski Woods, and he went up to the aspen, and saw there the nosebag was hanging very high, shaking in the winds to all sides. "Oh, you Death," he says, "are you still alive?"

A faint voice came out of the nosebag: "Yes, father, I am alive."

So the soldier took the nosebag, opened it, and he let out Death.

And he himself lay down on his bed, bade farewell to his wife and son, and he begged Death that he might die. And she[1] ran outside the door with all the strength in her feet. "Go!" she cried. "It is the devils who shall slay you—I shall not slay you!"

So the soldier remained alive and healthy. And he thought: "Shall I go straight into the burning pitch, for then the devils will throw me into the seething sulphur until such time as my sins shall have been melted from off me." And he bade farewell from all, and he went with the knapsack in his hand straight into the burning pitch.

And he went on: may-be near, may-be far, may-be downhill, may-be uphill, may-be short, may-be long; and he at last arrived in the abyss, and he looked, and all round the burning cauldron there stood watchmen. As soon as he stopped at the gate a devil asked who was coming.

"A guilty soul to be tortured."

"Why do you come? What are you carrying with you?"

"Oh, a nosebag."

And the devil shrieked out of his full throat and made

[1] Death is feminine in Russian.

a tremendous stir. All the infernal powers roused themselves and looked out of the gates and windows with their unbreakable bolts.

And the soldier went all round the cauldron, and he called out to the master of the cauldron: "Let me in, please; do let me into the cauldron. I have come to you to be tortured for my sins."

"No, I will not let you in. Go away wherever you will—there is no room for you here."

"Well, if you will not let me in to be tortured, at least give me two hundred souls. I will take them up to God, and perhaps the Lord will pardon my faults."

And the master of the cauldron answered: "I will add fifty more souls to the lot; only do go away!" So he instantly ordered two hundred and fifty souls to be counted out and to be taken to the rear gates in order that the soldier might not see him.

So the soldier gathered up the guilty souls, and he went up to the gates of Paradise.

The Apostles saw him, and said to the Lord: "Some soldier or other has come up here with two hundred and fifty souls from hell!"

"Take them into Paradise, but do not let the soldier in."

But the soldier had given up his nosebag to one guilty soul, and had told it: "Just look here. When you enter the gates of Paradise, say at once: 'Soldier, jump into the nosebag!'"

Then the gates of Paradise opened, and the souls began to go in; and this guilty soul also went in, and for sheer joy forgot all about the soldier.

Thus the soldier was left behind, and could not find any home in either place, and for long after that he still had to live and go on living in the white world. And after very many days he died.

THE MIDNIGHT DANCE

ONCE upon a time there was a king who was a widower. He had twelve daughters: each was fairer than the others. Every night these princesses went where nobody knew: it was only for twenty-four hours, and they always wore out a new pair of shoes. Now the king had no shoes ready for them, and he wanted to know where they went at night and what they did. So he made a feast ready, and he summoned all the kings and *korolévichi*, all the *boyárs*, and the merchants and the simple folk, to it, and he asked them, "Can any of you guess this riddle? Whoever guesses it I will give him my beloved daughter as a wife and a half of my kingdom as a dowry."

No one was able to find out where the princesses went at night. Only one poor nobleman cried out, "Your kingly Majesty, I will find out!"

"Very well; go and find out."

So then the poor nobleman began pondering and saying to himself, "What have I done? I have undertaken to find out, and I don't know myself! If I don't find out now, possibly the king will put me under arrest."

So he went out of the palace beyond the city, and went on and on, and at last he met an old woman on the road who asked him, "What are you thinking of, doughty youth?"

And he answered, "How should I, Bábushka, not become thoughtful? I have undertaken to discover for the king where his daughters go by night."

"Oh, this is a difficult task, but it can be done. Here,

I will give you the cap of invisibility; with that you cannot be seen. Now, remember, when you go to sleep the princesses will pour a sleeping-draught out for you: you turn to the wall and pour it into the bed and do not drink it."

So the poor nobleman thanked the old woman and returned to the palace. Night-time approached and they gave him a room next to that in which the princesses slept. So he lay on the bed and began to keep watch. Then one of the princesses brought sleeping-drugs in wine and asked him to drink her health. He could not refuse, and so he took the goblet, turned to the wall, and poured it into the bed. At midnight the princesses went to look whether he was asleep or not. Then the poor nobleman pretended to be as sound asleep as a log, and himself kept a keen look out for every noise.

"Now, sisters, our watchman has gone to sleep: it is time we set out on our promenade: it is time."

So they all put on their best clothes, and the elder sister went to her bedside, moved the bed, and an entrance into the subterranean realm instantly opened up beneath, leading to the home of the Accursèd Tsar.

They all went down a flight of stairs, and the poor nobleman quietly got off his bed, put on the cap of invisibility, and followed them. He, without noticing, touched the youngest princess's dress: she was frightened and said to her sisters, "O my sisters, somebody has stepped on my dress. This is a foretokening of woe."

"Nonsense; it does not mean anything of the sort!"

So they all went down the flight of steps into a grove, and in that grove there were golden flowers. Then the poor nobleman broke off and plucked a single sprig, and the entire grove rustled.

"Oh, sisters," said the youngest sister, "some unfortunate thing is injuring us. Did you hear how the grove rustled?"

"Do not fear; this is the music in the Accursèd Tsar's realm."

So they went into the Tsar's palace. He, with his lacqueys, met them; music sounded; and they began dancing: and they danced until their shoes were worn thin. Then the Tsar bade wine to be served to his guests. The poor nobleman took a single goblet from under his nose, poured out the wine, and put the cup into his pocket.

At last the rout was over, and the princesses bade farewell to their cavaliers, promised to come another night, turned back home, undressed and lay down to sleep.

Then the king summoned the poor nobleman, and asked him, "Did you keep watch on my daughters?"

"Yes, I did, your Majesty."

"Where did they go?"

"Into the subterranean realm, to the Accursèd Tsar, where they danced all night long."

So the king summoned his daughters, and began cross-examining them. "Where do you go at night?"

So the princesses tried a feint: "We have not been anywhere."

"Were you not with the Accursèd Tsar? There is this poor nobleman who can turn evidence on you. He is able to convict you."

"What do you mean, bátyushka? He can convict us when all night he slept the sleep of the dead?"

Then the poor nobleman brought the golden flower out of his pocket, and the goblet, and said, "There is the testimony."

What could they do? The princesses had to acknowledge their guilt, and the king bade the entrance to the subterranean realm be slated up. And he married the poor nobleman to the youngest daughter, and they lived happily ever after.

VASILÍSA THE FAIR

ONCE upon a time there was a merchant who had been married for twelve years and had only one daughter, Vasilísa the Fair. When her mother died the girl was eight years old. On her death-bed the mother called the maiden to her, took a doll out of her counterpane, said: "Vasilísushka, hear my last words. I am dying, and I will leave you my mother's blessing and this doll. Keep this doll always by you, but show it to nobody, and no misfortune can befall you. Give it food and ask it for advice. After it has eaten, it will tell you how to avoid your evil." Then the wife kissed her daughter and died.

After the wife's death the merchant mourned as it behoved, and then he thought of a second wife. He was a handsome man and found many brides, but he liked one widow more than any one. She was no longer young, and had two daughters of about the same age as Vasilísa. So she was an experienced housewife and mother. The merchant married her, but he had made a mistake, for she was no good mother to his own daughter.

Vasilísa was the fairest damsel in the entire village, and the stepmother and the sisters envied her therefore. And they used to torture her by piling all the work they could on her, that she might grow thin and ugly, and might be tanned by the wind and the sun. And the child lived a hard life. Vasilísa, however, did all her work without complaining, and always grew more beautiful and plumper, while the stepmother and her daughters, out of sheer spite, grew thinner and uglier. Yet there

they sat all day long with their hands folded, just like fine ladies. How could this be?

It was the doll that had helped Vasilísa. Without her the maiden could never have done her task. Vasilísa often ate nothing herself, and kept the tastiest morsels for the doll; and when at night they had all gone to bed, she used to lock herself up in her cellaret below, give the doll food to eat, and say, "Dollet, eat and listen to my misery. I am living in my father's house, and my lot is hard. My evil stepmother is torturing me out of the white world. Teach me what I must do in order to bear this life."

Then the doll gave her good advice, consoled her, and did all her morning's work for her. Vasilísa was told to go walking, plucking flowers; and all her flower-beds were done in time, all the coal was brought in, and the water-jugs carried in, and the hearthstone was hot. Further, the doll taught her herb-lore; so, thanks to her doll, she had a merry life; and the years went by.

Vasilísa grew up, and all the lads in the village sought her. But the stepmother's daughters nobody would look at; and the stepmother grew more evil than ever and answered all her suitors: "I will not give my eldest daughter before I give the elders." So she sent all the bargainers away, and to show how pleased she was, rained blows on Vasilísa.

One day the merchant had to go away on business for a long time; so the stepmother in the meantime went over to a new house near a dense, slumbrous forest. In the forest there was a meadow, and on the meadow there was a hut, and in the hut Bába Yagá lived, who would not let anybody in, and ate up men as though they were poultry. Whilst she was moving, the stepmother sent her hated stepdaughter into the wood, but she always came back perfectly safe, for the doll showed her the way by which she could avoid Bába Yagá's hut.

So one day the harvest season came and the stepmother gave all three maidens their task for the evening: one was to make lace and the other to sew a stocking, and Vasilísa was to spin. Each was to do a certain amount. The mother put all the fires out in the entire house, and left only one candle burning where the maidens were at work, and herself went to sleep. The maidens worked on. The candle burned down, and one of the stepmother's daughters took the snuffers in order to cut down the wick. But the stepmother had told her to put the light out as though by accident.

"What is to be done now?" they said. "There is no fire in the house and our work is not finished. We must get a light from the Bába Yagá."

"I can see by the needles," said the one who was making lace.

"I also am not going," said the second, "for my knitting needles give me light enough. You must go and get some fire. Go to the Bába Yagá!" And they turned Vasilísa out of the room.

And Vasilísa went to her room, put meat and drink before her doll, and said: "Dolly dear, eat it and listen to my complaint. They are sending me to Bába Yagá for fire, and the Bába Yagá will eat me up."

Then the Dollet ate, and her eyes glittered like two lamps, and she said: "Fear nothing, Vasilísushka. Do what they say, only take me with you. As long as I am with you Bába Yagá can do you no harm." Vasilísa put the doll into her pocket, crossed herself, and went tremblingly into the darksome forest.

Suddenly a knight on horseback galloped past her all in white. His cloak was white, and his horse and the reins: and it became light. She went further, and suddenly another horseman passed by, who was all in red, and his horse was red, and his clothes: and the sun rose. Vasilísa went on through the night and the next

day. Next evening she came to the mead where Bába Yagá's hut stood. The fence round the hut consisted of human bones, and on the stakes skeletons glared out of their empty eyes. And, instead of the doorways and the gate, there were feet, and in the stead of bolts there were hands, and instead of the lock there was a mouth with sharp teeth. And Vasilísa was stone-cold with fright.

Suddenly another horseman pranced by on his way. He was all in black, on a jet-black horse, with a jet-black cloak. He sprang to the door and vanished as though the earth had swallowed him up: and it was night. But the darkness did not last long, for the eyes in all the skeletons on the fence glistened, and it became as light as day all over the green.

Vasilísa trembled with fear, but remained standing, for she did not know how she could escape. Suddenly a terrible noise was heard in the forest, and the tree-boughs creaked and the dry leaves crackled. And out of the wood Bába Yagá drove in inside the mortar with the pestle, and with the broom swept away every trace of her steps. At the door she stopped, sniffed all the way round, and cried out:

"Fee, Fo, Fi, Fum, I smell the blood of a Russian mum!'

Who is there?"

Vasilísa, shuddering with dread, stepped up to her, bowed low to the ground, and said: "Mother, I am here. My stepmother's daughters sent me to you to ask for fire."

"Very well," said Bába Yagá: "I know them. Stay with me, work for me, and I will give you fire. Otherwise I shall eat you up."

Then she went to the door, and she cried out: "Ho! my strong bolts, draw back, my strong door, spring open!" And the door sprang open, and Bába Yagá

went in whistling and whirring, and Vasilísa followed her.

Then the door closed, and Bába Yagá stretched herself in the room and said to Vasilísa: "Give me whatever there is in the oven. I am hungry."

So Vasilísa lit a splinter from the skulls on the hedge and fetched Bába Yagá food out of the oven, and there was food enough there for ten men. Out of a cellar she fetched *kvas*, mead, and wine. Bába Yagá ate and drank it all up. But all there was left for Vasilísa was a little of some kind of soup, and a crust of bread, and a snippet of pork.

Bába Yagá lay down to sleep and said: "In the morning, to-morrow, when I go away you must clean the courtyard, brush out the room, get dinner ready, do the washing, go to the field, get a quarter of oats, sift it all out, and see that it is all done before I come home. Otherwise I will eat you up."

And, as soon as ever she had given all the orders, she began snoring.

Vasilísa put the rest of the dinner in front of the doll and said: "Dollet, eat it up and listen to my woe. Heavy are the tasks which the Bába Yagá has given me, and she threatens to eat me up if I don't carry them all out. Help me!"

"Have no fear, Vasilísa, thou fair maiden. Eat, pray, and lie down to sleep, for the morning is wiser than the evening."

Very early next day Vasilísa woke up. Bába Yagá was already up and was looking out of the window. The glimmer in the eyes of the skulls had dimmed; the white horseman raced by: and it dawned. Bába Yagá went into the courtyard, and whistled, and the mortar, the pestle, and the besom appeared at once, and the red horseman came by: and the sun rose. Bába Yagá sat in the mortar and went by, thrusting the mortar with

the pestle, and with the besom she removed every trace of her steps.

Vasilísa, left all by herself, looked over the house of the Bába Yagá, wondered at all the wealth gathered in, and began to consider what she should start with. But all the work was already done, and the doll had sifted out the very last of the ears of oats.

"Oh, my saviour!" said Vasilísa. "You have helped me in my great need."

"You now have only to get dinner ready," the doll answered, and clambered back into Vasilísa's pocket. "With God's help get it ready, and stay here quietly waiting."

In the evening Vasilísa laid the cloth and waited for Bába Yagá. The gloaming came, and the black horseman reached by: and it at once became dark, but the eyes in the skulls glowed. The trees shuddered, the leaves crackled, Bába Yagá drove in, and Vasilísa met her.

"Is it all done?" Bába Yagá asked.

"Yes, grandmother: look!" said Vasilísa.

Bába Yagá looked round everywhere, and was rather angry that she had nothing to find fault with and said: "Very well." Then she cried out: "Ye my faithful servants, friends of my heart! Store up my oats." Then three pairs of hands appeared, seized the oats and carried them off.

Bába Yagá had her supper, and, before she went to sleep, once more commanded Vasilísa: "To-morrow do the same as you did to-day, but also take the hay which is lying on my field, clean it from every trace of soil, every single ear. Somebody has, out of spite, mixed earth with it."

And, as soon as she had said it, she turned round to the wall and was snoring.

Vasilísa at once fetched her doll, who ate, and said as the had the day before: "Pray and lie down to sleep,

for the morning is wiser than the evening. Everything shall be done, Vasilísushka."

Next morning Bába Yagá got up and stood at the window, and then went into the courtyard and whistled; and the mortar, the besom, and the pestle appeared at once, and the red horseman came by: and the sun rose. Bába Yagá sat in the mortar and went off, sweeping away her traces as before.

Vasilísa got everything ready with the help of her doll. Then the old woman came back, looked over everything, and said: "Ho, my faithful servants, friends of my heart! Make me some poppy-oil." Then three pairs of hands came, laid hold of the poppies and carried them off.

Bába Yagá sat down to supper, and Vasilísa sat silently in front of her. "Why do you not speak; why do you stay there as if you were dumb?" Bába Yagá asked.

"I did not venture to say anything; but if I might, I should like to ask some questions."

"Ask, but not every question turns out well: too knowing is too old."

"Still, I should like to ask you of some things I saw. On my way to you I met a white horseman, in a white cloak, on a white horse: who was he?"

"The bright day."

"Then a red horseman, on a red horse, in a red cloak, overtook me: who was he?"

"The red sun."

"What is the meaning of the black horseman who overtook me as I reached your door, grandmother?"

"That was the dark night. Those are my faithful servants."

Vasilísa then thought of the three pairs of hands and said nothing.

"Why don't you ask any further?" Bába Yagá asked.

"I know enough, for you say yourself 'too knowing is too old.'"

"It is well you asked only about things you saw in the courtyard, and not about things without it, for I do not like people to tell tales out of school, and I eat up everybody who is too curious. But now I shall ask you, how did you manage to do all the work I gave you?"

"By my mother's blessing!"

"Ah, then, get off with you as fast as you can, blessed daughter; no one blessed may stay with me!"

So she turned Vasilísa out of the room and kicked her to the door, took a skull with the burning eyes from the fence, put it on a staff, gave it her and said, "Now you have fire for your stepmother's daughters, for that was why they sent you here."

Then Vasilísa ran home as fast as she could by the light of the skull; and the flash in it went out with the dawn.

By the evening of the next day she reached the house, and was going to throw the skull away, when she heard a hollow voice coming out of the skull and saying: "Do not throw me away. Bring me up to your stepmother's house." And she looked at her stepmother's house and saw that there was no light in any window, and decided to enter with the skull. She was friendlily received, and the sisters told her that ever since she had gone away they had had no fire; they were able to make none; and all they borrowed of their neighbours went out as soon as it came into the room.

"Possibly *your* fire may burn!" said the stepmother.

So they took the skull into the room, and the burning eyes looked into the stepmother's and the daughters' and singed their eyes out. Wherever they went, they could not escape it, for the eyes followed them everywhere, and in the morning they were all burned to cinders. Vasilísa alone was left alive.

Then Vasilísa buried the skull in the earth, locked the house up, and went into the town. And she asked a

poor old woman to take her home and to give her food until her father came back; she said to the old woman, "Mother, sitting here idle makes me feel dull. Go and buy me some of the very best flax; I should like to spin."

So the old woman went and bought good flax. Vasilísa set herself to work, and the work went merrily along, and the skein was as smooth and as fine as hair, and when she had a great deal of yarn, no one would undertake the weaving, so she turned to her doll, who said: "Bring me some old comb from somewhere, some old spindle, some old shuttle, and some horse mane; and I will do it for you."

Vasilísa went to bed, and the doll in that night made a splendid spinning stool; and by the end of the winter all the linen had been woven, and it was so fine that it could be drawn like a thread through the eye of a needle. And in the spring they bleached the linen, and Vasilísa said to the old mistress: "Go and sell the cloth, and keep the money for yourself."

The old woman saw the cloth and admired it, and said: "Oh, my child! nobody except the Tsar could ever wear such fine linen; I will take it to Court."

The old woman went to the Tsar's palace, and kept walking up and down in front of it.

The Tsar saw her and said: "Oh, woman, what do you want?"

"Almighty Tsar, I am bringing you some wonderful goods, which I will show to nobody except you."

The Tsar ordered the old woman to be given audience, and as soon as ever he had seen the linen he admired it very much. "What do you want for it?" he asked her.

"It is priceless, Bátyushka," she said; "I will give it you as a present."

And the Tsar thought it over and sent her away with rich rewards.

Now the Tsar wanted to have shirts made out of this same linen, but he could not find any seamstress to undertake the work. And he thought for long, and at last he sent for the old woman again, and said: "If you can spin this linen and weave it, perhaps you can make a shirt out of it?"

"I cannot weave and spin the linen," said the old woman; "only a maiden can who is staying with me."

"Well, she may do the work."

So the woman went home and told Vasilísa everything.

"I knew that I should have to do the work!" said Vasilísa. And she locked herself up in her little room, set to work, and never put her hands again on her lap until she had sewn a dozen shirts.

The old woman brought the Tsar the shirts, and Vasilísa washed and combed herself, dressed herself, and sat down at the window, and waited. Then there came a henchman of the Tsar's, entered the room and said: "The Tsar would fain see the artist who has sewn him the shirts, and he wants to reward her with his own hands."

Vasilísa the Fair went to the Tsar. When he saw her, he fell deep in love with her. "No, fairest damsel; I will never part from you. You must be my wife."

So the Tsar took Vasilísa, with her white hands, put her next to him, and bade the bells ring for the wedding.

Vasilísa's father came back home, and was rejoiced at her good luck, and stayed with his daughter.

Vasilísa also took the old woman to live with her, and the doll ever remained in her pocket.

THE ANIMALS IN THE PIT

A Pig was going to church at St. Petersburg, and the Wolf met him.

"Piggy, Piggy, where are you faring?"

"To St. Petersburg, to pray to God."

"Take me with!"

"Come along, Gossip."

So they went on together, and met the Vixen.

"Pig, where are you going?"

"To St. Petersburg, so please you."

"Take me with!"

"Come along, Gossip."

So they went on together and met the Hare, who said, "Piggy, Piggy, where are you going?"

"On to St. Petersburg, to pray to God?"

"Very well, take me with."

"Very well, Slant-eyes, I will."

Then they met the Squirrel, who also went with them. But on their road they came across a broad, deep pit. The Pig jumped and tumbled in, and after him the Wolf, the Fox, the Hare and the Squirrel.

And they sat there for a long time, and became very hungry, for they had nothing to eat.

"Let's all begin singing," said the Vixen, "and we will eat the animal who has the thinnest voice."

So the Wolf struck in a deep gruff voice, Aw, aw, aw! And the Pig followed in a tone just a shade softer, Oo, oo, oo! But the Vixen came in fine and sharp, Eh, eh, eh; whilst the Hare trilled the thinnest Ee, ee, ee in the world. The Squirrel also sang Ee, ee, ee! So the

animals at once set-to tearing up the Squirrel and Hare, and ate them down to their bones.

Next day the Vixen said: "We will eat the person with the fattest voice." That was the Wolf with his great gruff Aw, aw, aw! So they ate him up. The Vixen ate up the flesh and kept the heart and the bowels, And for three days she sat and ate them.

And the Pig then asked her: "What are you eating? —give me some!"

"Oh, Pig, I am eating my own flesh. You tear your belly up and munch it yourself."

So the Pig did, and the Vixen feasted on him.

The Vixen then was left as the last person in the pit.

Did she climb up, or is she there still? I don't know, really!

THE POOR WIDOW

A VERY long time ago Christ and the twelve Apostles walked on earth. They went about like simple people, and nobody could have known that it was Christ and the twelve Apostles.

Once they came to a village and they asked a rich peasant for a bed. The rich peasant would not let them in, telling them: "Over there there lives a widow who receives beggars; go to her." So they asked the widow for a night's rest, and the widow was poor, poor of the poorest; she had nothing at all. She had only a very little crust of bread and a mere handful of flour, and she also had a cow, but the cow had no milk.

"Yes, fathers," the widow said, "my little hut is very small, and there is nowhere to lie down."

"Never mind; we can manage somehow!"

So the widow received the wanderers, and did not know how to feed them.

"How shall I feed you?" the widow said. "I only have one little crust of bread and a mere handful of flour, and my cow is calving and has no milk. I have to wait for her to calve. You cannot look for bread and salt here."

"Well, woman," the Saviour said, "have no fear—we shall all be satisfied. Give us all you have. We will eat the crust. Everything, woman, comes of God."

So they sat down to table and began to feast, and they were all fed on the one crust of bread. There were even crumbs left behind.

"Lo and behold! woman, you said that there was nothing to feed us on," the Saviour said. "Look, we are all satisfied, and there are some crumbs over. Everything, woman, comes of God!" And so Christ and the Apostles stayed with the poor widow.

In the morning the widow told her sister: "Go and scrape up any flour you can find in the corn-bin; possibly we may make a tiny pancake so as to feed our guests." The girl went and brought up a clay pot full. The old woman was not astonished when so much came—she simply took it as it came and started making a pancake. And the girl told her: "There is as much again in the corn-bin." So the woman cooked the pancake for the Saviour and the twelve Apostles, telling them: "Come and eat of the good fare, kinsmen, which God has sent." And so they ate and bade farewell to the aged widow and went on the road.

And when they were on the way there was a grey wolf sitting on a knoll. He bowed low to Christ and asked for food.

"Lord," he bayed, "I am hungry. Lord, I should like to eat."

"Go," said the Saviour to him, "to the old widow and eat her cow with the calf."

And the Apostles were astonished and said: "Lord, why do you bid him snatch the poor widow's cow? She received you so kindly and fed us, and she was so happy in the expectation of the calf, for then the cow would have had milk, which is food for every home."

"That is how it must be," the Saviour replied. And they went on.

The wolf ran and snatched up the poor widow's cow, and when the old woman saw this she said contentedly: "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. Hallowed be His will!"

So Christ and the Apostles went on, and they met a

keg with money in it on the way. The Saviour said: "Keg, go and roll to the rich peasant's door."

And again the Apostles were astonished.

"Lord, it would have been better had you bidden the keg roll to the poor widow's door, for the rich man has so much."

"That is how it must be," the Saviour said. And they went on.

And the keg with the money in it rolled straight to the rich peasant's door, and the peasant took and hid the money and was still discontented. "Surely the Lord might have sent me more," he mused.

Christ and the Apostles went on their way and travelled still further. At midday the sun was very hot, and the Apostles wanted to drink.

"Lord," they said, "we should like to drink."

"Go," replied the Saviour, "and on this road you will find a well. There take your fill."

So the Apostles went on and on and on, and they saw a well. When they looked into it there was filth and dirt, toads, snakes and frogs, and everything vile, and the Apostles would not drink of it, and swiftly returned to the Saviour.

"Why did you not drink the water?" Christ asked them.

"As you, Lord, told us, the well was there, but it was so horrible that we could hardly look into it."

Christ answered never a word.

And they went forward on their road. They went on and on and on, and the Apostles again said to the Saviour: "We are thirsty."

So the Saviour sent them in another direction. "There you will see a well. Go and drink your fill."

The Apostles went to the other well, and there it was, beautiful—oh, so delightful! Enchanted trees were there and birds of paradise. They did not ever

want to leave it, and they drank of it, and the water was so pure, so chilled, and so sweet. And they came back.

"Why have you been so long?" the Saviour asked them.

"Why, we only took a short drink," the Apostles answered, "and we were only away three little minutes."

"You were not there three little minutes, but three whole years," the Lord answered. "As it was in the first well, so ill shall in the next world deal by the rich peasant; and as it was in the second well, so good shall be the poor widow's fare."

ILYÁ MÚROMETS[1] AND SVYATOGÓR THE KNIGHT

From the famous city of Múrom, out of the village of Karachárovo, the valiant, doughty youth Ilyá Múromets, the son of Iván, set out far into the open fields. The valiant champion met on his way the mighty knight Svyatogór; and the good youth was afraid of him; the old Cossack, Ilyá Múromets, was afraid of Svyatogór the knight. So he set his horse to browse and himself mounted a thick grey oak to avoid Svyatogór the knight. Svyatogór the knight arrived under that same stout oak, put up his white linen tent, and took his wife out of his pocket. She spread out the chequered table-cloths and put sugary food and honeyed drink for him to eat. Svyatogór ate until he was sated, and drank until he was satisfied, and lay down to repose.

Then the wife of the knight observed Ilyá up in the grey oak, and spoke to him in this wise: "Hail, valiant and brave youth; climb down from the grey oak. If you do not climb down from the grey oak, you will arouse Svyatogór the knight, and he will give you to a speedy death."

So Ilyá Múromets was afraid of Svyatogór, and slid down from the grey oak.

And again she spoke in this wise: "Come and do

[1] Ilyá Múromets is one of the heroes of the *Byliny*: his great feat is the slaying of the Nightingale Robber. This tale may be eponymous of geography; Svyatogór (*Svyáty Góry*, Sacred Mountains) Múrom is on the river Oka, in the Province of Vladímir, one of the oldest cities in Russia; the village of Karachárovo is not far off.

fornication with me, good youth. If you do not, I will arouse Svyatogór the knight, and he will give you to a speedy death."

So he did as he was bidden and went with her into the pocket of Svyatogór. Svyatogór arose from a sound sleep, saddled his horse, and went to the Holy Mountains. Then his horse began to sink fast into the earth, until the knight dug his spurs into his horse's fat haunches.

Then the horse spoke with a human voice: "I have carried you Svyatogór the knight and your young wife, but I cannot carry two knights and your young wife as well."

So then Svyatogór put his hand into the depths of his pocket, took his young wife out, and discovered Ilyá Múromets.

"How did you get into the depths of my pocket?"

"Your young wife forced me in there; she threatened my life." And Ilyá Múromets told Svyatogór the knight how he had fallen into the depths of the pocket.

So Svyatogór took his young wife, cut off her unruly head, broke up her white body into four parts, and scattered them on the bare fields.

Then Ilyá and Svyatogór made themselves sworn brothers, and they set out to the Holy Mountains. They came to a deep tomb, and the tomb was decked with red-gold. Svyatogór the knight lay down in that tomb as if it had been built for him.

"Cover me over with boards, my sworn brother," he said. And, as Ilyá covered him over with boards, the boards by Divine grace grew as they were required. "Uncover me, my sworn brother!"

But Ilyá Múromets had not the strength to uncover him; so he began to break the boards with his sword, and wherever he brandished his sword, hoops arose in his way.

"Take my sword, my sworn brother!"

And Ilyá took the sword, but had not the strength to lift it up.

"Come, my sworn brother, I will give you strength."

Ilyá then went into the pit and Svyatogór breathed on him with his knightly breath. Then Ilyá took that sword, and wherever he made a stroke, iron hoops arose around.

"Come to me a second time, my sworn brother; I will give you more strength."

Ilyá Múromets said at once: "If I come down to you again, then our mother the grey earth will not be able to bear it: I have enough strength."

But Svyatogór answered: "If you had come down again I should have breathed on you with a fatal breath, and you would have lain down to sleep beside me."

So there Svyatogór the knight remains to this day.

THE SMITH AND THE DEVIL

ONCE upon a time there was a smith who had a son six years old—a sturdy and sensible lad. One day the old man was going into the church, and stood in front of a picture of the Last Judgment. And he saw there was a devil painted there so terrible, so black, with horns and tail! "What a fine devil!" he thought. "I will go and paint such a devil for myself in the smithy." So he sent for a painter and told him to paint on the doors of the smithy a devil who should be exactly the same as the one he had seen in the church. This was done.

From this time forward, the old man, whenever he went into the smithy, always looked at the devil and said, "Hail, fellow-countryman!" And soon after he would go up to the forge, light the fire, and set to work. So he went on living for some ten years on most excellent terms with the devil. Then he fell ill and died. His son succeeded him and took over the smithy. But he had no such respect for the devil as his father had had. Whether he went early to the smithy or not, nothing prospered; and, instead of greeting the devil kindly, he went and took his very biggest hammer and knocked the devil three times on his forehead, and then set to work. When a holy feast-day came by, he went into the church and lit a taper in front of the saints; but, as he approached the devil he spat on him. For three whole years this went on; and every day he greeted the unclean spirit with a hammer and spat on him.

The devil was very patient, and endured all this maltreatment. At last it became beyond bearing, and he

would stand it no longer. "Time is up!" he thought. "I must put an end to such contemptuous treatment." So the devil turned himself into a fine lad and came into the smithy.

"How do you do, uncle?" he said.

"Very well, thank you!"

"Will you take me into the smithy as an apprentice? I will heat your coals and will blow the bellows."

Well, the smith was very glad. "I certainly will!" he said. "Two heads are better than one."

So the devil turned apprentice, and he lived a month with him, and soon got to know all of the smith's work better than the master himself; and, whatever the master could not do, he instantly carried out. Oh, it was a fine sight, and the smith so grew to love him, and was so content with him—I cannot tell you how much!

One day he did not come into the smithy, and left his underling to do the work; and it was all done.

Once when the master was not at home, and only the workman was left in the smithy, he saw an old rich lady passing by. He bobbed out his head, and cried: "Hail there? There is new work to be done—old folks to be turned into young!"

Out skipped the old lady from her barouche and into the smithy. "What are you saying you can do? Is that really true? Do you mean it? Are you mad?" she asked the boy.

"No reason to start lecturing me," the Evil Spirit answered. "If I didn't know how I should not have summoned you."

"What would it cost?" the rich woman asked.

"It would cost five hundred roubles."

"Well, there is the money. Turn me into a young woman!"

The Evil Spirit took the money, and sent the coachman into the village to get two buckets of milk. And he

seized the lady by the legs with the pinchers, threw her into the forge, and burned her all up. Nothing but her bones were left. When the two tubs of milk came, he emptied them into a pail, collected all the bones, and threw them into the milk. Lo and behold! in three minutes out the lady came, young—yes, alive and young, and so beautiful!

She went and sat down in the barouche and drove home, went up to her husband, and he fixed his eyes on her, and didn't know his wife. "What's the matter? Have you lost your eyesight?" the lady asked. "Don't you see it is I, young and stately; I don't want to have an old husband. Go at once to the smith and ask him to forge you young, and you won't know yourself!"

What could the husband do? Husbands must obey, and so off he drove.

In the meantime, the smith had returned home and went to the smithy. He went, and there was no sign of his man. He looked for him everywhere, asked everybody, questioned them, but it was no good, and all trace had vanished. So he set to work by himself and began hammering.

Then the husband drove up and said straight out to the smith: "Make a young man of me, please!"

"Are you in your senses, master? How can I make a young man of you?"

"Oh! you know how to!"

"I really have not any idea!"

"Liar! fool! swindler! Why, you turned my old woman into a young one. Do the same by me, otherwise life with her won't be worth living."

"But I have not seen your wife!"

"Never mind!—your young man saw her, and if he understood how to manage the work, surely you, as the craftsman, understand! Set to work quickly, unless you want to taste worse of me and be birched."

So the smith had no choice but to transform the master. So he quietly asked the coachman what his man had done with the lady, and thought: "Well, I don't mind! I will do the same; it may come out to the same tune, or it may not. I must look out for myself."

So he stripped the lord to his skin, clutched his legs up with nippers, threw him into the forge, began to blow up the bellows, and burned him to ashes. Afterwards he threw the bones—hurled them all into the milk, and began watching would a young master emerge from the bath. And he waited one hour, and another hour, and nothing happened, looked at the little tub—all the little bones were floating about all burned to pieces.

And what was the lady doing? She sent messengers to the smithy. "When was the master to be turned out?" And the poor smith answered that the master had wished her a long life. And you may imagine what they thought of this. Soon she learned that all the smith had done had been to burn her husband to bits and not to make him young, and she was very angry indeed, sent her body-servants, and ordered them to take the smith to the gallows. The order was given, and the thing was done. The attendants ran to the smith, laid hold of him, and took him to the gallows.

Then the same young man who had acted as a hand to the smith came and asked: "Where are they taking you, master?"

"They are going to hang me!" the smith said. And he explained what had happened.

"Well, never mind, uncle!" said the Unholy Spirit. "Swear that you will never strike me with your hammer, and I will secure you such honour as your father had. The lady's husband shall arise young and in full health."

The smith swore and made oath that he would never raise the hammer on the devil and would give him every honour.

Then the workman ran to the smithy, and soon returned with the husband, crying out to the servants to stop and not to hang the smith, for there the master was! He then untied the ropes and set the smith free.

And the youth thereafter never more spat on the devil and beat him with a hammer. But his workman vanished and was never seen again. The master and mistress lived on and experienced good in their life, and they are still alive, if they are not dead.

THE PRINCESS WHO WOULD NOT SMILE

If you think of it, what a big world God's world is: in it rich and poor folk live, and there is room enough for them all; and the Lord overlooks and judges them all. There are fine folk who have holidays, there are wailful folk who must moil; every man has his lot.

. . . . . .

In the Tsar's palace, in the Prince's chamber, every day the Princess Without a Smile grew fairer. What a life she had, what plenty, what beauty round her! There was enough of everything that exists that the soul may desire, but she never smiled, never laughed, and it seemed as though her heart could not rejoice at anything.

It was a bitter thing for the Tsar her father to gaze at his doleful daughter. He used to open his imperial palace to whoever would be his guest. "Come," he said, "come and try to enliven the Princess Without a Smile: any one who succeeds shall gain her as his wife." And as soon as he had said this all folk thronged up at the gates of the palace, driving up from all sides, coming on foot, Tsarévichi and princes' sons, *boyárs* and noblemen, military folk and civil. Feasts were celebrated, rivers of mead flowed, and the Princess would not smile.

But, at the other end of the town, in his own little hut, there dwelt an honourable labourer. Every morning he used to sweep out the courtyard: every evening he used to pasture the cattle, and he was engaged in

ceaseless labour. His master was a rich man, a just man, and he did not begrudge pay. When the year came to an end he put a purse of money on the table, "Take," he said, "as much as you like"; and the master went outside.

The workman went up to the table and thought, "How shall I not be guilty in the eyes of God if I take too much for my labour?" So he took only one little coin, put it into the hollow of his hand and thought he would have a little drink. So he went to the well, and the coin slipped through his fingers and fell to the bottom. So the poor fellow had nothing left. Now, anybody else in his place would have cried out, would have become melancholy and angry, might have put his hands up. He did nothing of the sort. "Everything," he said, "comes from God. The Lord knows what He gives to each man, whose money He divides, from whom He takes the last money. Evidently I have given bad care, I have done little work; and now am I to become angry?"

So he set to work once more. And all that his hand touched flew like fire. Then, when the term was over, when one year more had gone by, the master again put a purse of money on the table: "Take," he said, "as much as your soul desires"; and he himself went outside.

Then again the labourer thought how he should not offend God, how he should not take too much for his work. So he took one coin and he went to have a little drink at the well. In some way or other the money fell from his hands and the coin tumbled into the well and was lost.

So he set to work even more obstinately: at night he would not sleep and by day he would not eat. Other men saw their corn grow dry and yellow, but his master's corn prospered amain. Some men's cattle became bow-

legged, but his master's gambolled in the street. And the horses of some masters fell downhill, but his master's could not be kept to the bridle. The master knew very well whom he must thank, to whom he must render gratitude. So, when the third year came to an end, he laid a pile of money on the table: "Take, my dear man, as much as your soul desires. It is your work, and it is your money"; and he went out of the room.

Once more the workman took a single coin, went to the well for a drink of water and looked, and the lost money floated up to the surface: so he took them, and he then felt sure that God had rewarded him for his labour. He was joyous and thought, "It is now the time for me to go and look at the white world and to learn of people." So he thought this, and he went out whither his eyes gazed.

He went on to the field, and he saw a mouse running: "My friend, my dear gossip, give me a coin; I will be of service to you."

So he gave the mouse a coin.

Then he went to the forest, and a beetle crept up and said, "My friend, my dear gossip, give me a coin; I will be of service to you."

So he gave him the second coin.

Then he came up to the stream, and he met a sheatfish. "My friend, my dear gossip, give me a coin; I shall be of service to you."

And he could not refuse him, so he gave his last coin.

So then he came into the city. Oh, it was so thronged! All the doors were opened, and he looked, and the workman turned in all directions, and he did not know where to go. In front of him stood the Tsar's palace decked with gold and silver, and at the window the Tsarévna Without a Smile sat and gazed on him straight. What should he do? The light in his eyes turned dark, and a sleep fell on him, and he fell straight into the mud.

Up came the sheat-fish with his big whiskers, and after him the beetle and the mouse: they all ran up, they all pressed round him and did all the service they could. The little mouse took his coat: the beetle cleaned his boots, and the sheat-fish drove away the flies. The Princess Without a Smile gazed on their services, and she smiled.

"Who is he who has enlivened my daughter?" cried the King. One man said "I," and another man said "I."

"No," said the Princess, "that is the man there"; and she pointed out the workman.

Instantly he was taken into the palace, and the workman stood in the imperial presence, a youth such as never was: then the Tsar kept his princely word and gave what he had promised.

I am saying it. Was not this a mere dream? Did not the workman only dream it? They assure me this is not the fact, and that it all happened in real truth; so you must believe it.

THE TSARÉVICH AND DYÁD'KA[1]

ONCE upon a time, in a certain kingdom, in a city of yore, there was a King who had a dwarf son. The Tsarévich was fair to behold, and fair of heart. But his father was not good: he was always tortured with greedy thoughts, how he should derive greater profit from his country and extract heavier taxes.

One day he saw an old peasant passing by with sable, marten, beaver, and fox-skins; and he asked him: "Old man! whence do you come?"

"Out of the village, Father. I serve the Woodsprite with the iron hands, the cast-iron head, and the body of bronze."

"How do you catch so many animals?"

"The Woodsprite lays traps, and the animals are stupid and go into them."

"Listen, old man; I will give you gold and wine. Show me where you put the traps."

So the old man was persuaded, and he showed the King, who instantly had the Woodsprite arrested and confined in a narrow tower. And in all the Woodsprite's forests the King himself laid traps.

The Woodsprite-forester sat in his iron tower inside the royal garden, and looked out through the window. One day, the Tsarévich, with his nurses and attendants and very many faithful servant-maids, went into the garden to play. He passed the door, and the Woodsprite cried out to him: "Tsarévich, if you will set me free, I will later on help you."

[1] Affectionate term for old servant, equivalent to uncle.

"How shall I do this?"

"Go to your mother and weep bitterly. Tell her: 'Please, dear Mother, scratch my head.' Lay your head on her lap. Wait for the proper instant, take the key of my tower out of her pocket, and set me free."

Iván Tsarévich did what the Woodsprite had told him, took the key; then he ran into the garden, made an arrow, put the arrow on a catapult, and shot it far away. And all the nurses and serving-maids ran off to find the arrow. Whilst they were all running after the arrow Iván Tsarévich opened the iron tower and freed the Woodsprite. The Woodsprite escaped and destroyed all the King's traps.

Now the King could not catch any more animals, and became angry, and attacked his wife for giving the key away and setting the Woodsprite free. He assembled all the *boyárs*, generals, and senators to pronounce the Queen's doom, whether she should have her head cut off, or should be merely banished. So the Tsarévich was greatly grieved; he was sorry for his mother, and he acknowledged his guilt to his father.

Then the King was very sorry, and didn't know what to do to his son. He asked all the *boyárs* and generals, and said: "Is he to be hanged or to be put into a fortress?"

"No, your Majesty!" the *boyárs*, and generals, and senators answered in one voice. "The scions of kings are not slain, and are not put in prison; they are sent out into the white world to meet whatever fate God may send them."

So Iván Tsárévich was sent out into the white world, to wander in the four directions, to suffer the midday winds and the stress of the winter and the blasts of the autumn; and was given only a birch-bark wallet and Dyád'ka, his servant.

So the King's son set out with his servant into the open

fields. They went far and wide over hill and dale. Their way may have been long, and it may have been short; and they at last reached a well. Then the Tsarévich said to his servant, "Go and fetch me water."

"I will not go!" said the servant.

So they went further on, and they once more came to a well.

"Go and fetch me water—I feel thirsty," the Tsarévich asked him a second time.

"I will not go."

Then they went on until they came to a third well. And the servant again would not fetch any water. And the Tsarévich had to do it himself. When the Tsarévich had gone down into the well the servant shut down the lid, and said: "You be my servant, and I will be the Tsarévich; or I will never let you come out!"

The Tsarévich could not help himself, and was forced to give way; and signed the bond to his servant in his own blood. Then they changed clothes and rode on, and came to another land, where they went to the Tsar's court, the servant-man first, and the King's son after.

The servant-man sat as a guest with the Tsar, ate and drank at his table. One day he said: "Mighty Tsar, send my servant into the kitchen!"

So they took the Tsarévich as scullion, let him draw water and hew wood. But very soon the Tsarévich was a far finer cook than all the royal chefs. Then the Tsar noticed and began to like his young scullion, and gave him gold. So all the cooks became envious and sought some opportunity of getting rid of the Tsarévich. One day he made a cake and put it into the oven, so the cooks put poison in and spread it over the cake. And the Tsar sat at table, and the cake was taken up. When the Tsar was going to take it, the cook came running up, and cried out: "Your Majesty, do not eat it!" And he told all

imaginable lies of Iván Tsarévich. Then the King summoned his favourite hound and gave him a bit of the cake. The dog ate it and died on the spot.

So the Tsar summoned the Prince and cried out to him in a thundering voice: "How dared you bake me a poisoned cake! You shall be instantly tortured to death!"

"I know nothing about it; I had no idea of it, your Majesty!" the Tsarévich answered. "The other cooks were jealous of your rewarding me, and so they have deliberately contrived the plot."

Then the Tsar pardoned him, and he made him a horseherd.

One day, as the Tsarévich was taking his drove to drink, he met the Woodsprite with the iron hands, the cast-iron head, and the body of bronze. "Good-day, Tsarévich; come with me, visit me."

"I am frightened that the horses will run away."

"Fear nothing. Only come."

His hut was quite near. The Woodsprite had three daughters, and he asked the eldest: "What will you give Iván Tsarévich for saving me out of the iron tower?"

"I will give him this table-cloth."

With the table-cloth Iván Tsarévich went back to his horses, which were all gathered together, turned it round and asked for any food that he liked, and he was served, and meat and drink appeared at once.

Next day he was again driving his horses to the river, and the Woodsprite appeared once more. "Come into my hut!"

So he went with him. And the Woodsprite asked his second daughter, "What will you give Iván Tsarévich for saving me out of the iron tower?"

"I will give him this mirror, in which he can see all he will."

And on the third day the third daughter gave him a

pipe, which he need only put to his lips, and music, and singers, and musicians would appear before him.

And it was a merry life that Iván Tsarévich now led. He had good food and good meat, knew whatever was going on, saw everything, and he had music all day long: no man was better. And the horses! They—it was really wonderful—were always well fed, well set-up, and shapely.

Now, the fair Tsarévna had been noticing the horseherd for a long time, for a very long time, for how could so fair a maiden overlook the beautiful boy? She wanted to know why the horses he kept were always so much shapelier and statelier than those which the other herds looked after. "I will one day go into his room," she said, "and see where the poor devil lives." As every one knows, a woman's wish is soon her deed. So one day she went into his room, when Iván Tsarévich was giving his horses drink. And there she saw the mirror, and looking into that she knew everything. She took the magical cloth, the mirror, and the pipe.

Just about then there was a great disaster threatening the Tsar. The seven-headed monster, Ídolishche, was invading his land and demanding his daughter as his wife. "If you will not give her to me willy, I will take her nilly!" he said. And he got ready all his immense army, and the Tsar fared ill. And he issued a decree throughout his land, summoned the *boyárs* and knights together, and promised any who would slay the seven-headed monster half of his wealth and half his realm, and also his daughter as his wife.

Then all the princes and knights and the *boyárs* assembled together to fight the monster, and amongst them Dyád'ka. The horseherd sat on a pony and rode behind.

Then the Woodsprite came and met him, and said; Where are you going, Iván Tsarévich?"

"To the war."

"On this sorry nag you will not do much, and still less if you go in your present guise. Just come and visit me."

He took him into his hut and gave him a glass of *vódka*. Then the King's son drank it. "Do you feel strong?" asked the Woodsprite.

"If there were a log there fifty *puds*, I could throw it up and allow it to fall on my head without feeling the blow."

So he was given a second glass of *vódka*.

"How strong do you feel now?"

"If there were a log here one hundred *puds*, I could throw it higher than the clouds on high."

Then he was given a third glass of *vódka*.

"How strong are you now?"

"If there were a column stretching from heaven to earth, I should turn the entire universe round."

So the Woodsprite took *vódka* out of another bottle and gave the King's son yet more drink, and his strength was increased sevenfold. They went in front of the house; and he whistled loud, and a black horse rose out of the earth, and the earth trembled under its hoofs. Out of its nostrils it breathed flames, columns of smoke rose from its ears, and as its hoofs struck the ground sparks arose. It ran up to the hut and fell on its knees.

"There is a horse!" said the Woodsprite. And he gave Iván Tsarévich a sword and a silken whip.

So Iván Tsarévich rode out on his black steed against the enemy. On the way he met his servant, who had climbed a birch-tree and was trembling for fear. Iván Tsarévich gave him a couple of blows with his whip, and started out against the hostile host. He slew many people with the sword, and yet more did his horse trample down. And he cut off the seven heads of the monster.

Now Marfa Tsarévna was seeing all this, because she

kept looking in the glass, and so learned all that was going on. After the battle she rode out to meet Iván Tsarévich, and asked him: "How can I thank you?"

"Give me a kiss, fair maiden!"

The Tsarévna was not ashamed, pressed him to her very heart, and kissed him so loud that the entire host heard it!

Then the King's son struck his horse one blow and vanished. Then he returned to his room, and sat there as though nothing had happened, whilst his servant boasted that he had gone to the battle and slain the foe. So the Tsar awarded him great honours, promised him his daughter, and set a great feast. But the Tsarévna was not so stupid, and said she had a severe headache.

What was the future son-in-law to do? "Father," he said to the Tsar, "give me a ship, I will go and get drugs for my bride; and see that your herdsman comes with me, as I am so well accustomed to him."

The Tsar consented; gave him the ship and the herdsman.

So they sailed away, may be far or near. Then the servant had a sack sewn, and the Prince put into it, and cast him into the water. But the Tsarévna saw the evil thing that had been done, through her magic mirror; and she quickly summoned her carriage and drove to the sea, and on the shore there the Woodsprite sat weaving a great net.

"Woodsprite, help me on my way, for Dyád'ka the servant has drowned the King's son!"

"Here, maiden, look, the net is ready. Help me with your white hands."

Then the Tsarévna threw the net into the deep; fished the King's son up, took him home, and told her father the whole story.

So they celebrated a merry wedding and held a great feast. In a Tsar's palace mead has not to be brewed

or any wine to be drawn; there is always enough ready.

Then the servant in the meantime was buying all sorts of drugs, and came back. He came to the palace, was seized, but prayed for mercy. But he was too late, and he was shot in front of the castle gate.

The wedding of the King's son was very jolly, and all the inns and all the beer-houses were opened for an entire week, for everybody, without any charge.

I was there. I drank honey and mead, which came up to my moustache, but never entered my mouth.

PRINCE EVSTÁFI

In a certain kingdom once there lived a Tsar who had a young son—Tsarévich Evstáfi—who did not love visiting or dances, nor promenades, but only liked going in the streets and walking among the poor, the simple folk, and the beggars, and bestowing alms on them. And the Tsar was very angry with him for this, and commanded him to be taken up to the gallows and to be delivered to a cruel death.

So the attendants took the Tsarévich, and were on the point of hanging him, when the Tsarévich fell on his knees before his father and began to ask for three hours' interval. And the Tsar agreed, and gave him the three hours' respite.

And the Tsarévich went to the silversmith's and ordered him to make three chests—one of gold, one of silver, and for the third he was simply to divide a stump into two, to mortise out a trough, and to attach a lock. So the smith made the three cases, and took them up to the gallows.

The Tsar with all his *boyárs* looked on to see what was going to happen. And the Tsarévich opened the cases and showed them. On the gold one, very much gold had been poured, on the silver, very much silver had been poured, and the wooden one was buried in dirt. He showed them, and once more opened the cases, and then banged them tight.

And the Tsar was even more angry, and he asked Prince Evstáfi: "What is this new insolence of yours?"

"My king and my father," said the Tsarévich Evstáfi,

" you are here with the *boyárs* to value these cases, what they are worth."

Then the *boyárs* valued the silver case at a high price, and the golden one at a higher price still, and did not deign to look at the wooden one.

And Evstáfi Tsarévich said: " Now open the cases and see what is in them."

And they opened the golden case and there were snakes and frogs and all sorts of dirt in it; and looked into the silver one, and they saw the same; and looked into the wooden one, and there trees with leaves and fruit were growing, which emitted sweet odours, and in the middle there was a church and an orchard.

And the Tsar was humbled; and did not bid Evstáfi be punished.

VASILÍSA POPÓVNA

In a certain kingdom, in a certain country, once there lived Vasíli the pope and his daughter, Vasilísa Vasílyevna. She used to dress in male fashion, used to sit astride on horseback; shot with her gun, and did nothing like other girls; and there were very few who knew that she was a maiden. It was always thought that she was a man, and they called her Vasíli Vasílyevich. And the main reason that they so called her was because Vasilísa Vasílyevna loved *vódka*—a custom ill-befitting a maid.

Once Tsar Bárkhat[1] (this was the name of the King) was travelling through this same country hunting deer, and Vasilísa Vasílyevna met him: she was riding out to hounds in a man's clothes. When Tsar Bárkhat saw her, he asked: "Who is this young man?"

And an attendant answered him: "Tsar, this is no young man, but a maiden. I am certain of it; she is the daughter of Pope Vasíli, and her name is Vasilísa Vasílyevna."

The Tsar had hardly reached home before he sent a note to Pope Vasíli, bidding his son Vasíli Vasílyevich come and dine with him at the imperial table. And he, in the meantime, went to his old evil-tempered housekeeper and bade her devise some means of eliciting whether Vasíli Vasílyevich were a maiden.

The old evil housekeeper said: "Hang an embroidery-frame in your palace, at the right hand, and a gun on the left; if she is really Vasilísa Vasílyevna, she will, as soon

[1] The word means velvet.

as ever she enters the palace, first take hold of the frame; but, if it is Vasíli Vasílyevich he will lay hands on the gun."

Tsar Bárkhat obeyed the counsel of his ancient evil housekeeper and ordered his attendants to hang an embroidery-frame and a flint-lock up in the palace.

As soon as ever her father Vasíli received the Tsar's message he communicated it to his daughter, Vasilísa Vasílyevna, who at once went into the stable and saddled the grey horse with the silver mane, and rode straight out to the courtyard of Tsar Bárkhat.

Tsar Bárkhat came to meet her. She humbly prayed God, crossed herself as is ordained, bowed to all four sides, and greeted Tsar Bárkhat friendliwise, and with him entered the palace. They sat down to table together, ate sweetmeats, and drank strong wine. After the dinner Vasilísa Vasílyevna went for a walk with the Tsar through the palace. As soon as ever she saw the embroidery-frame she began to scold Tsar Bárkhat: "Whatever nonsense have you hanging up there, Tsar Bárkhat? I never saw such girlish trash in my father's house, and I have never heard of it, and yet you find it hanging in Tsar Bárkhat's palace!" And she promptly bade a courteous farewell to the Tsar and rode home.

And the Tsar was still in a quandary whether she were a maiden or not. Two days later Tsar Bárkhat sent another message to Pope Vasíli, begging him send his son Vasíli Vasílyevich. As soon as Vasilísa Vasílyevna heard that she went into the stable and saddled the grey horse with the silver mane, and galloped away to Tsar Bárkhat's courtyard. Tsar Bárkhat came to meet her, and she greeted him friendlily, modestly prayed to God, crossed herself, as is becoming, and bowed to the four quarters of the wind. At the advice of the old and evil housekeeper he had commanded a sweet pie to be made for

supper and pearls to be mixed in it, for the old hag said: "If it is only Vasilísa Vasílyevna, she will take up the pearls; but, if it is Vasíli Vasílyevich, he will throw them under the table."

So they passed the time merrily and they sat down. The Tsar sat at table and Vasilísa Vasílyevna on his right. They ate sweetmeats and they drank strong wines. Then there came the pie, and as soon as even Vasilísa Vasílyevna's spoon touched it, it tingled on the pearls; and she flung them and the pie under the table, and began to scold the Tsar. "Who," she asked, "put these into the pie? Whatever nonsense have you here, Tsar Bárkhat? I never saw such girlish trash in my father's house, and I have never heard of them, and yet you find them in Tsar Bárkhat's food!" And she bade farewell courteously and rode home.

Still the Tsar was utterly at a loss whether it were a maiden, and he had made up his mind to find out. So, two days later, the Tsar, at the advice of the old evil-minded housekeeper, had the bath heated, for the old woman said: "If it is only Vasilísa Vasílyevna she will not go into the bath together with the Tsar." So the bath was heated, and Tsar Bárkhat sent Pope Vasíli another message that he would like to have his son Vasíli Vasílyevich as his guest; and when Vasilísa Vasílyevna heard of it she went into the stable and saddled the grey horse with the silver mane, and galloped away to Tsar Bárkhat's courtyard. He received her at the state entrance. They greeted each other friendlily, and she trod on velvet pile into the palace. As she came in she prayed devoutly, crossed herself, as is seemly, and bowed to all four quarters, and sat together with the Tsar at table. They ate sweetmeats and drank strong wine.

After the dinner the Tsar said: "Will you not come with me into the bath, Vasíli Vasílyevich?"

"If you wish it, mighty Tsar," Vasilísa Vasílyevna

answered. "It is a long time since I have had a bath, and I should like a steam bath."

But before ever the Tsar had had time to undress in the front room, she was in the bath and out of it, so quick was she, and the Tsar was as puzzled as ever. In the meantime Vasilísa Vasílyevna had written a letter and bade the attendants give it to the Tsar as soon as he came out of the bath. And this was what she wrote:

"O you crow, you Tsar Bárkhat! The crow has not caught the falcon in the garden. I am not Vasíli Vasílyevich, but Vasilísa Vasílyevna!"

This was the way in which Tsar Bárkhat was hoodwinked; and you see how clever and beautiful Vasilísa Vasílyevna was.

THE DREAM

One day an old, old man was wandering about the earth, and he asked for a night's shelter from the peasant. "Certainly," said the peasant—"I shall be only too glad; only, will you go on telling me stories all night long?"

"Yes, all right! I will tell you stories; only, let me rest here."

"Then, pray, come in!"

So the old man entered the hut and lay down on the sleeping bench on the top of the stove.

And the master said: "Make yourself ready, honoured guest. We shall have supper. Now, old man, tell me a story."

"Wait a bit; I had better tell you one in the morning."

"As it please you!" And they lay down to sleep.

Then the old man went to sleep, and dreamed that there were two candles blazing in front of the images and two birds fluttering in the *izbá*.[1] He felt thirsty, and wanted to drink, got off the sleeping bench, and there were newts running about on the floor. And he went up to the table, and saw frogs jumping and croaking on it. Then he looked up at the master's eldest son, and there was a snake lying in between him and his wife. And he looked at the second son, and on the second son's wife there was a cat which was yawning at the man. Then he looked at the third son, and between him and his wife there was a young man lying. This all seemed rather queer to the old man, and rather strange.

[1] Hut.

So he went and lay on the corn-kiln, and there he heard shrieks: "Sister! Sister! come and fetch me!" Then he went and lay under the fence, and there he heard a cry: "Pull me out and stick me in again!" Then he went and lay on the cauldron, and he heard a cry: "I am hanging on the cross-beam! I am falling on the cross-beam!" Then he went back into the hut.

The master woke up and said: "Now tell me a story."

But the old man replied: "I shall not tell you a story, only the truth. Do you know what I have just dreamed? I went to sleep and thought I saw two candles blazing in front of the images and two birds fluttering inside the hut."

"Those are my two angels fluttering about."

"And I also saw a snake lying between your son and his wife."

"That is because they quarrel."

"And I looked also at your second son, and there was a cat sitting on his wife, and yawning at the man."

"That means that they are bad friends, and the wife wants to get rid of the husband."

"Then, when I looked at your next son, I saw a youth lying in between them."

"That is not a youth, but an angel who was lying there; and that is why they are on such good and loving terms."

"Why is it, then, master of the house, when I slipped off the sleeping shelf that there were newts running on the floor; and, when I wanted to drink at the table, I saw frogs leaping about and croaking?"

"Because," the peasant answered, "my daughters-in-law do not sweep up the lathes; but put the *kvas* on the table when they are sitting round together without saying grace."

"Then I went to sleep on the corn-kiln, and I heard a cry: 'Sister! Sister! come and fetch me!'"

"That means that my sons never put the brush back into its place and say the proper blessing."

"Then I went to lie under the fence, and I heard a cry: 'Pull me out and stick me in again!'"

"That means that the stick's upside-down."

"Then I went and lay under the cauldron. And I heard a cry of 'I am hanging on the cross-beam! I am falling on the cross-beam!'"

"That means," said the master, "that, when I die, my entire house will fall."

THE SOLDIER AND THE TSAR IN THE FOREST

In a certain kingdom, in a certain State, lived a peasant who had two sons. The recruiting-sergeant came round and took the elder brother. So the elder brother served the Tsar with faith and loyalty, and was so fortunate in his service that in a few years he attained a general's rank.

Now at this same time there was a new enlistment, and the lot fell on his younger brother, and they shaved his brow. And it so happened that he was made to serve in the very same regiment in which his brother was a general. The soldier recognised the general, but it was no good, because the general would not acknowledge him at all: "I do not know you, and you must not claim acquaintance with me!"

One day the soldier was standing on sentry-go at the ammunition-wagons just outside the general's quarters, and the general was giving a great dinner, and a multitude of officers and gentlemen were going to him. The soldier saw that it was jollity within, but that he himself had nothing at all, and he began to weep bitter tears.

Then the guests began to ask him, "Tell us, soldier, why are you crying?"

"Why should I not cry? There is my own brother faring abroad and making merry, but he forgets me!"

Then the guests told the general of this; but the general was angry: "Do not believe him, he is an utter liar." So he ordered him to be taken away from

sentry-go, and to be given thirty blows with the cat, so that he should not dare to claim kinship.

This offended the soldier, so he put on undress uniform and decamped.

In some time, maybe long, maybe short, he found himself in a wood so wild, so dreamy, that he could not get out of it anywhere, and he began killing time and feeding on berries and roots.

Just about this time the Tsar was setting out, and made a mighty hunt with a splendid suite. They galloped into the open fields, let loose the hounds, and sounded trumpets, and began to press in. Suddenly from somewhere or other a beautiful stag leapt out straight in front of the Tsar, dived into the river, and swam across to the other side right into the wood. The Tsar followed after him, swam over the river, leapt and leapt and looked; but the stag had vanished from view, and he had left the hunters far behind, and all around him was the thick dark forest. Where should he go? He did not know: he could not see a single path. So until the fall of the evening he ambled about and tired himself out.

On his way the runaway soldier met him. "Hail, good man, where are you going?"

"Oh, I was out on a hunt and I lost my way in the wood; will you lead me to the right path, brother?"

"Who are you?"

"A servant of the Tsar."

"Well, it is dark now; we had better take shelter somewhere in the thickets, and to-morrow I will show you the way."

So they went to look where they might pass the night, went on and on, and they saw a little hut. "Oho! God has sent us a bed for the night; let us go there," said the soldier. So they went into the little hut.

There an old woman sat. "Hail, *bábushka!*"

"Hail, soldier!"

"Give us something to eat and drink."

"I have eaten it all up myself, and there is not anything to be had."

"You are lying, old devil!" said the soldier, and began rummaging about in the stove and on the shelves. And he found plenty in the old woman's hut: wine and food, and all ready. So they sat down at the table, feasted to their fill, and went to lie down in the attic.

Then the soldier said to the Tsar, "God guards him who guards himself; let one of us rest and the other stand guard." So they cast lots, and the Tsar had to take the first watch. Then the soldier gave him his sharp cutlass, put him at the door, bade him not go to sleep, and arouse him if anything should happen. Then he himself lay down to sleep. But he thought, "Will my comrade be able to stand sentry-go? Possibly he is unaccustomed to it; I will take watch over him." Then the Tsar stood there and stood, and soon began to nod.

"What are you nodding for?" asked the soldier: "are you going to sleep?"

"No!" said the Tsar.

"Well, then, keep a good look-out!"

So the Tsar stood a quarter of an hour, and again dozed off.

"Ho, friend, you are not dozing?"

"No, I don't think so." And he again dozed off.

"Ho, friend, you are not dozing?"

"I don't think so: if you go to sleep do not blame me."

Then the Tsar stood a quarter of an hour longer, and his legs bowed in, he fell on the ground and went to sleep.

The soldier jumped up, took the cutlass and went to recall him and to have a talk: "Why do you keep

guard in this way? I have served for ten years, and my colonel never forgave me a single sleep: evidently they have not taught you anything. I forgave you once before; a third guilt is unpardonable. Well, now go to sleep; I will stand and watch."

So the Tsar went and lay down to sleep, and the soldier went sentry-guard and did not close his eyes.

Very soon there was a whistling and a knocking, and robbers came into that hut. The old woman met them and told them, "Guests have come in to spend the night."

"That is very well, *bábushka;* we have been rambling the woods in vain all night, and our luck has come into the hut; give us supper."

"But our guests have eaten and drunk everything up."

"What bold fellows they must be: where are they?"

"They have gone to sleep in the garret."

"Very well; I will go and settle them!"

So a robber took a big knife and crept up into the garret; but as soon as ever he had poked his head into the door, the soldier swept his cutlass round, and off came his head.

Then the soldier took a drink and stood and waited on eventualities. So the robbers waited and waited and waited. "What a long time he has been!" So they sent a man to look after him and the soldier killed him also, and in a short time he had chopped off the heads of all the robbers.

At dawn the Tsar awoke, saw the corpses, and asked, "Ho, soldier, into what danger have we fallen?"

So the soldier told him all that had happened. Then they came down from the attic. When the soldier saw the old woman he cried out to her, "Here, stop, you old devil! I must have some business with you. Why are you acting as a receiver for robbers? Give us all the money now." So the old woman opened a

box full of gold, and the soldier filled his knapsack with gold and all of his pockets. He then said to his companion: "You also take some."

So the Tsar answered, "No, brother, I need not; our Tsar has money enough without this; and if he has it, we shall also have it."

"Well, I suppose you ought to know!" said the soldier, and he took him out of the wood into the broad road. "Go," he said, "on this road, and in an hour you will reach the town."

"Farewell," said the Tsar. "Thank you for the service you have done me; come and see me, and I will make you a happy man."

"Very well; but that's a fine tale! I am a runaway soldier: if I show my head in the town I shall be seized on the spot."

"Have no fear, soldier: the Tsar is very fond of me; and, if I ask him for a favour on your behalf and tell him of your bravery, he will forgive you and have pity on you."

"Where can I find you?"

"Go into the palace."

"Very well; I will go there to-morrow."

So the Tsar and the soldier said good-bye. And the Tsar went on the broad road into his capital, and without delay he ordered all the staffs and the watches and the sentries to keep their eyes open, and as soon as a certain soldier came to give him the honour due to a general.

Next day, as soon as ever the soldier had appeared at the barriers, a sentry ran out and gave him a generous honour. So the soldier wondered, "What does this mean?" And he asked, "To whom are you showing these honours?"

"To you, soldier."

So he took a handful of gold out of his wallet and gave

it to the sentry as a tip. Then he entered the town. Wherever he went all the sentries gave him honours, and he always paid them back in tips. "What a wretched dolt was this servant of the Tsar's: he has given a hint to everybody that I have plenty of money on me!" So he came up to the palace, and the entire army was assembled there, and the Tsar met him in the same dress in which he had gone hunting.

Then the soldier at last saw with whom he had passed the night in the wood, and he was terribly frightened. "This was the Tsar," he said, "and I threatened him with my cutlass, just as though he had been my brother!" But the Tsar took him by the hand and rewarded him with a generalship, and degraded the brother into the ranks, telling him he must not disown his own kin.

THE TALE OF ALEXANDER OF MACEDON

ONCE upon a time there lived a king on the earth whose name was Alexander of Macedon: this was in the old days very long ago. So long ago that neither our grandfathers, nor great-grandfathers, nor our great-great grandfathers, nor our great-great-great-grandfathers recollect it. This Tsar was one of the greatest knights of all knights that ever were. No champion of earth could ever conquer him. He loved warfare, and all his army consisted entirely of knights. Whomsoever Tsar Alexander of Macedon might go to combat, he would conquer, and he numbered under his sway all the kings of the earth.

He went to the edge of the world, and he discovered such peoples that he, however bold he was himself, felt afraid of them; ferocious folk, fiercer than wild beasts, who ate men; live folks who had but one eye; and that eye was on the forehead; folks who had three eyes, folks who had only a single leg; others who had three, and they ran as fast as an arrow darts from the bow. The names of these peoples were the Gogs and Magogs. Tsar Alexander of Macedon never lost courage at seeing these strange folk, but he set to and waged warfare on them. It may be long, it may be short, the war he waged—we do not know. Only the wild peoples became dispersed and ran away from him. He began to hunt and to chase after them, and he chased them into such thickets, precipices and mountains as no tale can tell and no pen can describe.

So at last they were able to hide themselves from Tsar

Alexander of Macedon. What then did Tsar Alexander of Macedon do with them? He rolled one mountain over them, and then another roof-wise on top; on the arch he put trumpets, and he went back to his own land. The winds blew into the trumpets, and a fearsome roar was then raised to the skies, and the Gogs and Magogs sitting there cried out, "Oh, evidently Alexander of Macedon must still be alive!" The Gogs and Magogs are still alive and to this day are afraid of Alexander. But, before the end of the world, they shall escape.

THE BROTHER OF CHRIST

An old man was dying, and he was enjoining on his son not to forget the poor.

So on Easter Day he went into the church, and he took some fine eggs with him with which to greet his poor brothers, although his mother was very angry with him for so doing—for she was an evil-minded woman and merciless to the poor.

When he reached the church there was only one egg left, and there was one dirty old man. And the lad took him home to break his fast with him.

When the mother saw the poor man, she was very wroth. "It would be better," she said, "to break your fast with a dog than with such a filthy old beggar." And she would not break the fast.

So the son and the old man broke their fast together, and went out for a walk. Then the son looked and saw that the dress of the old man was very shabby, but the cross on him burnt like fire.

"Come," said the old man, "we will change crosses; you become my brother by the cross."

"No, brother," the lad replied, "however much I may wish it; for I should get such a fine cross as you are carrying, and can give you nothing in return."

But the old man overbore the youth, and they exchanged. And he asked him to come as his guest on Tuesday in Easter week. "And if you want to find your way," he said, "follow the path yonder. You need only say, 'The Lord bless me!' and you will find me."

That very Tuesday the youth set out on the footpath,

and said: "The Lord bless me!" and set out on his way journeying forth. He went a little way, and he heard children crying: "Brother of Christ, speak of us to Christ, whether we must be long in pain?" And he went on a few steps farther; and he saw maidens ladling water out of one well into another. "Brother of Christ!" they said to him, "speak of us to Christ, how long we must remain in torture?" And he went on still farther, and saw a hedge, and beneath that hedge there became visible old men, and they were all covered with slime. And they said to him: "Brother of Christ, speak of us to Christ, how long shall we remain in pain?"

And so he went on and on. Then he saw the very old man with whom he had broken his fast. And the old man asked him: "What did you see on the way?"

And the youth recounted all that he had met.

"Well, do you recognise me?" said the old man. And it was only at this moment that the peasant boy understood that he was speaking to Jesus Christ Himself.

"Why, O Lord, are the children tortured?"

"Their mother cursed them in the womb, and they can never enter Paradise."

"And the maidens?"

"They traded in milk, and they mixed water with their milk; and now for all eternity they must ladle out water."

"And the old men?"

"They lived in the white world, and they used to say: 'How pleasant it really might be to live in this world! But, as it is, there is nothing worth caring about!' So they must bear up against the mire."[1]

Then Christ led the boy into Paradise, and told him

[1] Cf. Dante, *Inf.*

Fitti nel limo dicon; 'Tristi fummo.
Nel dolce mondo che dal sol s'allegra. . . .
Or c'attristiam' nella belletta negra.

his place was ready for him there, and you may be sure the boy was none too anxious to leave it on that day. And afterwards He led him into Hell, and there the peasant's mother was sitting.

So the peasant boy began to beseech Christ to have mercy on her. "Have mercy on her, Lord!"

And Christ bade the lad plait a rope of brome-grass. The peasant plaited the rope of brome-grass, and the Lord must have supervised.

And he brought it to Christ, Who said: "Now you have been weaving this rope for thirty years and have laboured sufficiently for your mother, rescue her out of Hell."

And the son dangled the rope down to the mother who was sitting in the boiling pitch. And the rope never burned nor singed: so did God provide. And the son tried and tried to drag his mother up, and caught hold of her head, and she cried out to him: "You savage dog! Why, you are almost choking me!" Then the rope broke off, and the guilty soul once more flew down into the burning pitch.

"She had not desired to escape," said Christ, "and all of her heart is down there, and she must stay there for all eternity."

ALYÓSHA POPÓVICH[1]

In the sky the young bright moon was being born, and on the earth, of the old prebendary, the old pope León, a son was born, a mighty knight, and he was called by name Alyósha Popóvich, a fair name for him.

When they began to feed Alyósha, what was a week's food for any other babe was a day's food for him, what was a year's food for others was a week's food for him.

Alyósha began going about the streets and playing with the young boys. If he touched the little hand of anyone, that hand was gone: if he touched the little nose of anyone, that nose was done for: his play was insatiate and terrible. Anyone he grappled with by the waist, he slew.

And Alyósha began to grow up, so he asked his mother and father for their blessing, for he wished to go and to fare into the open field.

His father said to him, "Alyósha Popóvich, you are faring into the open field, but we have yet one who is even mightier than you: do you take into your service Marýshko, the son of Parán."

So the two youths mounted their good horses and they fared forth into the open field. The dust rose behind them like a column, such doughty youths were they to behold.

So the two doughty youths went on to the court of Prince Vladímir. And Alyósha Popóvich went straight to the white stone palace, to Prince Vladímir, crossed

[1] This is a prose version of a *bylina*: Alyósha Popóvich is one of the Kíev cycle.

himself as is befitting, bowed down in learned-wise in all four directions, and especially low to Prince Vladímir. Prince Vladímir came to meet the doughty youths and set them down at an oaken table, gave the doughty youths good food and drink, and then asked their news. And the doughty youths sat down to eat baked gingerbread and to drink strong wines.

Then Prince Vladímir asked the doughty youths, "Who are ye, doughty youths? Are ye mighty knights of prowess or wandering wayfarers bearing your burdens? I do not know either your name or your companion's name."

So Alyósha Popóvich answered, "I am the son of the old prebendary León, his young son Alyósha Popóvich, and my comrade and servant is Maryshko, the son of Parán."

And when Alyósha had eaten and drunk he went and sat on the brick stove to rest from the midday heat, whilst Maryshko sat at the table.

Just at that time the knight, the Snake's son, was making a raid and was ravaging all the kingdom of Prince Vladímir. Túgarin Zmyéyevich[1] came to the white stone palace, came to Prince Vladímir. With his left leg he stepped on the threshold and with his right leg on the oaken table. He drank and ate and had conversation with the princess, and he mocked Prince Vladímir and reviled him. He put one round of bread to his cheek and piled one on another; on his tongue he put an entire swan, and he thrust off all the pastry and swallowed it all at a gulp.

Alyósha Popóvich was lying on the brick stove, and spake in this wise to Túgarin Zmyéyevich: "My old father, León the pope, had a little cow which was a great glutton: it used to eat up all the beer vats with all the lees; and then the little cow, the glutton, came

[1] The strong man, the Serpent's son.

to the lake, and it drank and lapped all the water out of the lake, took it all up and it burst, and so it would also have torn Túgarin to bits after his feed."

Then Túgarin was wroth with Alyósha Popóvich and burst on him with his steel knife. Alyósha turned aside and stood behind an oaken column. Then Alyósha spoke in this wise: "I thank you, Túgarin Zmyéyevich; you have given me a steel knife: I will break your white breast, I will put out your clear eyes, and I will behold your mettlesome heart."

Just at that time Maryshko Paránov leapt out from behind the table, the oaken table, on to his swift feet, seized Túgarin, and fell on his back and threw him over; lifted up one of the chairs and hurled in the white stone palace, and the glass windows were shattered.

Then Alyósha Popóvich said from the brick stove, "O Maryshko, son of Parán, thou hast been a faithful servant!"

And Maryshko the son of Parán answered, "Do you give me, Alyósha Popóvich, your steel knife, and I will break open the white breast of Túgarin Zmyéyevich, I will close his clear eyes, and I will gaze on his mettlesome heart."

But Alyósha answered, "Hail, Maryshko Paránov, do you not sully the white stone palace; let him go into the open field wherever he may, and we will meet him to-morrow in the open field."

So, in the morning early, very early, Maryshko the son of Parán arose, together with the little sun, and he led out the stout horses to water them in the swift stream. Túgarin Zmyéyevich flew into the open and challenged Alyósha Popóvich to fight him in the open field. And Maryshko Paránov came to Alyósha Popóvich and said: "God must be your judge, Alyósha Popóvich: you would not give me your steel knife; I should have carved out the white breast from that pagan thief, I

should have gouged out his bright eyes, and I should have taken out his mettlesome heart and gazed on it. Now, what will you make of Túgarin? He is flying about in the open."

Then Alyósha Popóvich spake in this wise: "That was no service, but treachery."

So Alyósha led out his horse, saddled it with a Circassian saddle, fastened it on with twelve silken girths, not for the sake of decoration, but for the sake of strength. And Alyósha set out into the open field. Alyósha set out into the open field, and he saw Túgarin Zmyéyevich, who was flying in the open.

Then Alyósha made a prayer: "Holy Mother of God, do thou punish the black traitor, and grant out of the black cloud a thick gritty rain that shall damp Túgarin's light wings, and he may fall on the grey earth and stand on the open field!"

It was like two mountains falling on each other when Túgarin and Alyósha met. They fought with their clubs, and their clubs were shattered at the hilts. Their lances met, and their lances broke into shreds. Then Alyósha Popóvich got down from his saddle like a sheaf of oats, and Túgarin Zmyéyevich was almost striking Alyósha down. But Alyósha Popóvich was cautious. He stood between his horse's feet and, turning round to the other side from there, smote Túgarin with his steel knife under his right breast, and threw Túgarin from his good horse. And then Alyósha Popóvich cried out, "Túgarin, I thank you, Túgarin Zmyéyevich, for the steel knife: I will tear out your white breast, I will gouge out your bright eyes, and I will gaze on your mettlesome heart."

Then Alyósha cut off his turbulent head, and he took the turbulent head to Prince Vladímir. And as he went on he began playing with that little head, flinging it high up in the air and catching it again on his sharp lance.

But Vladímir was dismayed. "I see Túgarin bringing me the turbulent head of Alyósha Popóvich: he will now take captive all of our Christian kingdom."

But Maryshko Paránov gave him answer: "Do not be distressed, oh bright little sun, Vladímir, in thy capital of Kíev. If Túgarin is coming on earth and is not flying in the skies he is putting his turbulent head on my steel lance. Do not be afraid, Prince Vladímir; whatever comes I will make friends with him."

Then Maryshko the son of Parán looked out into the open field, and he recognised Alyósha Popóvich, and he said, "I can see the knightly gait and youthful step of Alyósha Popóvich. He is guiding his horse uphill and he is playing with a little head: he is throwing the little head sky-high, and is catching the little head on the point of his sharp lance. He who is riding is not the pagan Túgarin, but Alyósha Popóvich, the son of the old prebendary, the pope León, who is bringing the head of the pagan Túgarin Zmyéyevich."

GOD'S BLESSING COMPASSES ALL THINGS

ONCE upon a time in a certain country, in a certain kingdom, there were two peasants, Iván and Naúm. They entered into a partnership and went together to look for work, and they rambled about until they came to a rich village and got work with different masters. For the whole week they kept at work and met on Sunday for the first time.

"Brother, how much have you earned?" asked Iván.

"God has given me five roubles."

"God gave them to you? He does not give much unless you work for it."

"No, Brother, without God's blessing you can do nothing; you cannot gain a groat."

So they quarrelled about this, and at last they decided, "We will each go our own way. We will ask the first man we meet which of us is right. He who loses the bet must sacrifice all his earnings."

So they went on some twenty paces. Afterwards they came across an unholy spirit in human guise, and they asked him and received his reply. "What you earn for yourself is the proper thing; place no reliance on God."

Naúm gave Iván his money and returned empty-handed to his master. One week later the two men met once again, and set about the same argument. Naúm said: "Though you took my money from me last week, still, this week God gave me yet more."

"If God gave it you as you said, we will once more ask the first person who meets us who is right. The

loser of the bet shall have the money, and shall have his right hand hewn off."

Naúm consented. On their way they met the same devil, who returned the same reply. Iván gave Naúm his money, hacked off his right hand, and left it behind.

Naúm pondered for a long time what he should do without his right hand. Who would give him meat and drink? But God is merciful. So he went to the river, and he lay down on a boat on the shore. "I will sit down here, and to-morrow I may see what I shall do, for the morning is wiser than the evening."

And about midnight very many devils assembled on the boat and began to tell each other what tricks they had played. The first said: "I started a quarrel between two peasants, backed up the one who was in the wrong; and the one, who was in the right, had his hand hacked off."

"That's not much of a feat! If he were to wave his hand, three times over the dew, his hand would grow again," said the second.

Then the third began to boast, "I have sucked a lord's daughter dry, and she can hardly stir."

"What! if any one had any compassion on the lord, he would heal the daughter at once. It is as simple as possible. You have only to take this herb"—pointing to a herb on the shore—"cook it, boil her in the brew, and she will be healed."

"In a certain pond," a fifth devil said, "there is a peasant who has put up a water-mill, and for many years he has been striving to make it go, but whenever he lets the water through the sluice, I make a hole in it, and all the water flows through."

"What a fool your peasant is!" said the sixth devil. "He ought to dam it up well, and as soon as the water breaks through, throw in a sheaf of straw, and all your work would be no good."

Naúm had listened very attentively. Next day he grew his hand on again, then he saw to the peasant's dam, and he healed the lord's daughter. Both the peasant and the lord rewarded him richly, and he lived a fine life.

Once he met his former companion, who was very much astonished, and asked: "How is it you have become so rich, and how did you grow your hand on again?"

Naúm told him exactly what had happened, and kept nothing back.

Iván listened very attentively, and thought, "Ha! I shall do the same, and shall become richer than he!" So he went to the river and lay down on the shore, in the boat.

And at midnight all the devils gathered together. "Brothers," they said, "somebody must have been eavesdropping on us, for the peasant's hand grew again, the maiden is healed, and the mill-wheel is turning!"

So they burst on the boat, found Iván, and tore him into tiny bits.

. . . . . .

Then the wolves wept cows' tears.

SHEMYÁK THE JUDGE

Once in a certain country, in a certain kingdom, there lived two brothers; one was rich and the other poor. One day the poor brother came to the rich and asked him for a horse to fetch wood out of the forest. The rich man lent him a horse. Then the poor man also asked him for a horse-collar: this the rich brother refused, and became angry. Then the poor man decided to tie the wood to the horse's tail. And so he drove into the wood. He cut down so much wood that the horse could hardly drag it. When he got home he opened the door, but he forgot to remove the cross-beam. The horse jumped over it, but wrenched his tail out.

The poor brother brought the rich man the horse back without a tail. When he saw the animal in this condition, he would not take it; but went with the poor man before Judge Shemyák. The poor man went with his brother, and surmised he would fare very badly, for the sentence would be exile; the poor man is a butt for all, as he cannot give anything.

The brothers came to a rich peasant and asked for a night's lodging. The peasant gave the rich man good food and drink, but the poor man nothing. The poor man lay on the oven and saw how merry the other two were making; and fell down and killed the child in the cradle.

Then the peasant decided to go with the brothers, to bring a further indictment against the poor man. They went off together, the peasant and the rich brother in front, and the poor man after them. Then they crossed

a bridge: the poor man considered that he would hardly escape the Court with his life; so he jumped over the bridge, in order to commit suicide. But, under the bridge, a son was bathing his sick father, and the poor man fell plump on the old man and drowned him. Then the son also went up to the Court in order to bring a plaint against the poor man.

The rich man put in a plea to the Court that his poor brother had torn off the horse's tail. In the meantime the poor man had wrapped a stone in a cloth and was threatening the judge with it behind the brother's back, for he was thinking, "If the judge goes against me, I will kill him." The judge believed that the poor man was offering him a hundred roubles so as to prove his case, and he gave judgment that the rich man must leave the horse in the poor peasant's possession until the tail grew again.

Then the peasant came and complained that the poor man had killed his son. Once again the poor man lifted up the same stone in a menacing way against the judge, behind the peasant's back. And the judge this time felt perfectly sure of getting a hundred roubles more for the judgment. And he commanded the peasant to give his wife to the poor peasant until another son was born. "Then you can take your wife and the child back."

This time it was the son's turn. And he brought in a plea that the poor man had murdered his father. Once again the poor man took the stone out of his pocket and showed it to the judge. Then the judge felt sure he would get altogether three hundred roubles in the case, and he commanded the son to go to the bridge, "and you, poor man, go there; stop under the bridge; and the son is to jump into the water plump on to you and to kill you."

Judge Shemyák sent his servant to the poor man to ask for the three hundred roubles.

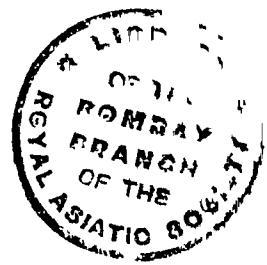
Then the poor man showed the servant the stone with which he had threatened the judge: "If the judge had not decided in my favour I should have killed him with this stone!"

When the judge heard of this, he crossed himself piously and said: "Thank God I decided for the right party."

The poor brother went to the rich brother to fetch the horse from him in accordance with the judge's decision, until the tail should grow again. The rich man did not want to give the horse, so he gave him instead five roubles, three quarters of corn, and a milch-goat; and made peace with him for all time.

Then the poor man went to the peasant, and in accordance with the judgment, asked for the wife, in order that she might remain with him until another child came. Then the peasant made a compromise with the poor man, gave him fifty roubles, a cow and a calf, and a mare with a foal, and four quarters of corn, and settled matters with him.

Then the poor man went to the son whose father he had killed, and read the judgment out to him, according to which the son was to jump on him from the bridge, so as to kill him. Then the son began to consider: "If I do jump, possibly I shall kill him, possibly I shall not; anyhow I shall be done for." So he made terms with the poor man, gave him two hundred roubles and a horse, and five quarters of corn; and lived in peace with him for ever.


ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

A STORY OF SAINT NICHOLAS

In a certain city, in a certain state, there once lived a merchant Nicholas with his wife. From the beginning they lived happily and were wealthy. But their chief joy was in this: that the Lord had presented them with a son, and such a beautiful son too! Sensible and wise—and the only prayer which the mother and father addressed to God and to his holy godfather St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker, was that they should endow him with happiness and long life.

But, as old age crept on, they, for some reason, began to become poor; and they became so poor that Nicholas, from a famous merchant, became a mere tradesman, and they only had one little shop, and in the shop there was a chest of tobacco, a few nails, and a little iron. And either from the fact that they were growing poorer, or that they were becoming older, the mother and father of Iván—for this was the name of Nicholas's son—had become feeble.

One day the father called Iván to him, and said: "Now, our beloved son, we, it seems, shall soon die; but do you not weep for us, but rather pray God. For we have already lived out our life; and this is as it must be. But you bury us properly, for I have saved up money for you for this purpose. One third of the money you are to spend on the funeral, the second on the Requiem Mass, and with the third buy a shop and go into trade. And I will give you my blessing. Do not give any one false measure or cheat; and if you shall grow rich, do not forget God, and to give alms to the

poor, as I did time agone. Now, my son, farewell. May the Divine mercy guard you and our guilty souls."

Seven days passed, and Iván buried his father, and his mother soon afterwards, and began to trade. Soon he began to overlook the stock, and in the corner he found an image of the holy St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker. So he brought the image into the *izbá*[1] and he poured water into a vessel, washed it out, cleaned it in front of the image, and soon after went to market, bought a little lamp, and lighted it in front of the image.

On the first Sunday he called the Pope in, had a Mass said for his parents, chanted a prayer to St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker, and took the image into the shop, so that he might gaze at it constantly; and thereafter, whenever he went into the shop, he used first of all to pray before the image, and afterwards he began to trade.

And his trade went so well that it seemed as if the Lord Himself had been sending customers. Later on he built a second shop, and every day he gave much money in alms, and amongst others, to one old man who every day repaired to him. Iván was very fond of him, and when a new clerk had to be engaged for the new shop, he said to this old man: "Grandfather, I do not know thy hallowed name; I do not know, father, how to call thee; only do not be angry with me, for I have built a new shop, and I have no clerk. Come with me as my clerk, and I will obey you as I would have obeyed my own father. Do be kind and do not refuse."

The old man at the beginning would very gladly have refused; but afterwards they agreed, and began to live and dwell together, and Iván, in all things, obeyed the old man, and called him *Bátyushka.*

The old man carried on trade prosperously and profitably; and one day he said: "Ivánushka, your trade does not altogether suit me; for you trade in tobacco,

[1] Hut.

and God loves not smoking, nor does He love tobacconists. So buy some small goods, and you will have more purchasers, and will not incur sin."

Iván obeyed, and purchased many goods of all sorts, and set up shop anew. When all the goods were sold out, Iván went into the counting-house, and he saw threefold his money wherever he looked. Iván was extremely joyous at so big a profit, and he called in the Pope, and he recited the prayer to Nicholas the Wonder-Worker. And as to the old man, he was so happy, and he prayed so heartily to God.

So they traded on for three years more, and Iván became so rich that the old man advised him to sell out and cross the seas with his goods. And Iván obeyed the old man, bought a ship, loaded it with wares, and gave his house to the poor, setting one of them in as the master until he should come back himself. And they prayed to God, and he and the old man set sail.

Soon they arrived: it may be near, it may be far—the tale is soon told, but the deed is not soon done—and suddenly robbers came upon them and plundered them of all their goods: and only left themselves alive and unscathed. It was a bitter shock to Iván. But the old man quieted him, and said that all of this was for the best. So they sailed on for three days after this; and on the third day they landed on an island, and they saw a great mass of bricks. The old man said to Iván: "Get ready, Ivánushka, and load these bricks on your ship." Iván said: "What shall I do with these bricks? I would sooner die than do trade in them." But the old man answered and said: "Oh, Ivánushka, Ivánushka, you have had little experience; and I tell you that any single one of these bricks is worth more than all the wares of which the robbers plundered you!" And he threw one of the bricks on the ground, and under the clay there was a splendid jewel.

So Iván was glad, and began loading the ship with the bricks. And when they had loaded it to the full, the old man said: "Now, Ivánushka, you must also make some plain bricks in order that buccaneers may not steal the valuable ones." So they loaded plain bricks as well. But on their way the wind arose and they sailed farther, and the robbers fell on them again and began to search for the goods. So the old man said to them: "Have mercy, good folk! Leave us alive; for robbers some time ago took away all we had, and now we only carry bricks, such bricks as we made on the island." The pirates looked and were persuaded and sailed farther on, and so did Iván and the old man, and very soon arrived at a haven and stayed there.

In that kingdom there was a custom that all merchants who arrived should bring some of all their wares as a homage to the king. So the old man said to Iván: "Ivánushka, pray to the Lord God, and go and buy a golden vessel and a *fatá*, and to-morrow go and make your homage to the king." Iván obeyed the old man, and the next day went to make his homage to the king. They told the king that a merchant had come to do allegiance, and the king sat on his throne and gave audience to Iván.

Iván came up to the king, and in his hands there was a golden vessel covered by a *fatá*, and in the golden vessel there was a brick. So the king asked Iván from what realm he came, and how his father and mother were named. And then he uncovered the *fatá*, and when he saw the brick he was very wroth, and said: "I suppose you think I have very few bricks, and you have come to trade in them in my kingdom!" And then he rushed at Iván. But Iván turned aside and the brick fell to the ground and split in two.

Then the king saw that he had behaved unseemly-wise, and began to ask Iván for forgiveness. And he

forthwith bought the entire ship off Iván. And when Iván saw this, he said: "You may take all my goods, but I will not sell my vessel, for therein do I have an old man who is my clerk, and we should not be able to live in the town." "Oh," said the king, "are there two of you?" And the king, on hearing this, became very angry, and said: "I will not let you go, but I must have the ship." And Iván went down on his knees and besought him that he would let them go. Then the king said: "If one of you will read some psalms for three nights to my daughter who is now in the church, you may keep the ship." For his daughter was a witch, and every night turned into a human being.

Iván returned to his ship, and he was sad and disheartened. He did not wish to go himself, for he did not wish to die; and if he dismissed the old man, it was very hard to part.

The old man said to Iván: "Why, Ivánushka, why are you so miserable and hang your head?" And Iván told him all that had happened, and what the king had said. So the old man answered him: "Never mind, Ivánushka, cheer up! Pray to the Saviour, and lie down and sleep, and I will think out some means of getting out of the danger."

Soon it began to grow dark, and the old man roused Iván and said: "Here are three tapers. As long as the first burns, pray to God; when the second is burnt out, light the third, and then enter by the right-hand side of the Holy Gates by the altar-screen and say nothing; only mutter a prayer all the time. Go, and God bless you."

So Iván landed, and the king's attendants took Iván into the church and locked it, and he began to read the Psalter. One candle went out and then another, and he lighted the third, and lay down at the right-hand side of the Holy Gates. Then the flooring suddenly jumped up, and the witch began to search for Iván: "Where

are you? 'I want to eat you." And she looked, and she looked, and she could not find him, and then the cock crew, and she went once more into the grave. Then Iván got up, covered up the grave, and began to read once more.

In the morning they went there to collect his bones; but there Iván was, as large as life. And they went and told the king. And he bade him for the second time go and read prayers.

And Iván went to the old man and told him what had happened in the church by night.

Next night the old man told Iván to lie down on the left-hand side of the Holy Gates. And once more the witch could not find him.

On the third night the old man gave him three tapers and a ball of pitch; and the pitch was rolled round with hair. He said: "To-night, Ivánushka, is the last night. When you have burned out the last taper, lie down beside the grave, and when the witch rises out of it, go and lie in the grave in her place, and do not let her in until she shall read out the prayers '*Maiden Mother of God, rejoice!*' and '*Our Father Which art in Heaven.*'"

Iván went into the church and began to read the Psalter, and after lighting the third candle, lay down on the right-hand side of the grave. The witch broke out of the coffin and passed over Iván and began to look for him all over the church. When the time came for her to lie down, there was Iván in her place. "Ah! there art thou!" the witch cried. "For thrice twenty-four hours I have been hungry. Come out; I want to eat you." And Iván threw the ball covered with hair at her, and she nibbled and gnawed at it. And she at last said: "Let me go!" "No," said Iván, "I will not let you go." "Let me go!" the witch repeated. "Then do you," said Ivan, "recite the prayer '*Maiden Mother of God, rejoice!*' after me, and then I will let you go."

And the witch read out the prayer and then said: "Let me go!" And Iván said: "Now read the *Our Father*, then I will let you go." And the witch read it out. Then Iván came out and said: "Lie down." But the witch said: "Now I cannot lie down." Then she and Iván began to pray.

In the morning two men came in, and they not only saw Iván, but also Olyóna, the king's daughter—for this was the witch's name. And they went to the king, and recounted all they had beheld.

And the king assembled all the spiritual hierarchy and went into the church. And he thought it must be that Iván had turned into a wizard, but when he saw how things really were, he embraced Iván and called him his son. And the witch said to Iván: "Now, Iván, the merchant's son, if you have been able to pray to God and to bring me to life again, now learn how to master me, and I will never depart one step from you."

So Iván went to the ship, and he told the old man all that had happened, and the old man said: "Iványushka, fear nothing, take Olyóna Korólyevna[1] as your wife, only for the first three nights do not go to sleep until the cock has crowed three times, and then she will never more oppress you."

There was no loitering at the king's court; very soon all was got ready, and Iván was affianced to Princess Olyóna. And for two weeks he lived quite happily. Then he said to his father-in-law: "Good father, let me go home and have a Mass said for my father and mother, and once more see my home." And the king said: "My beloved son, Iván, the merchant's son, I will not withstand your wish, but do return hither. You see yourself I am no longer young, and I have no heir. When you return I will give you my kingdom, and you will live happily and merrily."

[1] *Koról'* king: hence princess.

So they set out on their journey, and arrived at their own kingdom, to their native land. And Iván took Olyóna with him. When they arrived at the island of the bricks, they loaded all the vessels, and there were many ships, and they excavated the entire island.

One day the old man began to cut firewood, took them to the opposite side of the island and said: "Iván-ushka, my well-doer, I must now speak with you." And he bade them come where the firewood was stacked. He lit the firewood; and when it was in flame he took Olyóna, threw her down, trod on one leg, and pulled her apart into two halves, taking hold of the other leg. Iván did not know what to say! And the old man put both halves on the fire, and out of the fire there then crept snakes, frogs, and all sorts of reptiles. Then he took the two parts out of the fire, rinsed them thoroughly in the sea, sprinkled them over with water, made the sign of the cross, and Olyóna arose such a beauty as no tale can tell and no pen can write. Then he said: "Now, my well-doer, Iványushka, you are to be a mighty king; Iván, the merchant's son, you are now rich and famous and happy, so see to it that you do not forget God and the poor. I shall see you no more."

Iván and Olyóna knelt down and began to beseech him, but the old man said: "Beg no more of me, but rather thank God for sending me to you. I loved you and your father, Iván, and you even more, because you kindly gave me alms; and now you are rich and famous, do not forget to give alms to the poor." Then he vanished.

Iván and Olyóna praised God, went back to the ships, and sailed farther on.

When the poor saw that Iván had arrived with untold wealth, they crowded to the shore and began to kiss Iván's hands, his feet, and the hem of his garment;

and all present were so joyous that the tears flowed from their eyes.

Iván put up crosses on his parents' grave, clothed the poor, gave them his house, and returned to his father-in-law, and for many years governed his kingdom. And he lived so long that he saw in his old age his sons, his grandsons, and his great-grandsons. And he ever prayed and blessed God and Nicholas the Wonder-Worker for the mercy they had manifested to him.

In that kingdom where he was king, to this very day King Iván and his wife Olyóna the Fair are remembered.[1]

[1] I have taken this story as it stands. There are obvious gaps I have not ventured to fill up.

THE POTTER

ONCE a potter was journeying on his road with his goods and dozed off. The Tsar Iván Vasílgevich came driving by in his carriage and said, "Peace be to you!"

The potter looked up and said, "I thank you very much and wish you the same."

"Have you been asleep?"

"Yes, my lord. Do not fear a man who sings songs; but fear a man who slumbers!"

"You are a bold fellow, potter: I have seen very few such, and I like them. Coachman, slower! Potter, tell me, have you been long at your trade?"

"Ever since my youth, and I am now middle-aged."

"Can you keep your children with it?"

"Yes, I do not sow, nor plough, nor mow, nor reap, and no frosts can do me any harm."

"Right, potter; but there are still misfortunes left in the world."

"Yes, I know three of them."

"What are the three?"

"The first is an evil neighbour, the second an evil wife, and the third a weak understanding."

"Yet now, tell me which is the worst of these evils?"

"The evil neighbour can be escaped; so can the evil wife if one has children enough, but the weak intellect can never be got rid of."

"Yes, that is true, potter; you are a sensible fellow. Listen! You suit me and I suit you. When there are geese flying over Russia, will you pluck a feather out of them or let them fly by in peace?"

"If it suit me, I should let them fly by as they should; otherwise I should pluck them bald."

"Potter, hold in your horse a little while I look at your stock."

The potter stopped and displayed his goods.

"Can you make any such for me?"

"How many?"

"Ten cart-loads."

"How long will you require?"

"One month."

"In a fortnight I can bring them into the town. I suit you and you suit me."

"Thank you, potter."

"Will you be in the city when I bring the goods?"

"Yes, I shall be there as the merchant's guest."

So the Tsar drove into the city and ordered that at all his feasts the plates should be neither of silver nor of pewter, nor of copper nor of wood, but only of clay. The potter carried out the Tsar's orders and brought his goods into the city. A *boyár* rode up to the potter and said to him: "God be with you, potter."

"Thank you, your honour."

"Sell me all your goods."

"I cannot; they are already sold."

"What does that matter? Take my money for it; you will be doing no wrong, as long as you have received no orders for the work. What do you want?"

"I want every plate filled with money."

"Listen, potter—that is too much."

"Very well, then: one filled with money and two empty. Do you agree?"

So they agreed at that: "You suit me and I suit you."

They filled up the plates and again emptied them, and they went on filling plates until there was not any money left: but there were ever so many plates over. The *boyár* saw he was getting the worst of the bargain

and sent for more money from the house. So they piled the plates higher still, but all the money vanished, and still all the goods had not been used up.

"What is to be done, potter? Why are you so greedy?"

"There is nothing to be done."

"I have a very high esteem for you, potter, but do you know what?"

"Do you carry me in to the courtyard, and I will give you the goods and the money back as well."

So the *boyár* hesitated: he was very sorry to lose his money and for himself, but he could not help himself, and so they agreed. They unharnessed the horse, and the peasant sat in the carriage and the *boyár* walked on. The potter sang a song, and the *boyár* drew it along, drew it along. "How far must I take you in front of that courtyard?"

The potter went on singing joyously and said, "In front of the house, at the very top of the carriage."

When he reached the palace he stood up erect and sang, joyously.

The Tsar heard him singing and ran to the flight of steps, and recognised the potter. "Ha! welcome, potter!"

"Thank you, your honour."

"What are you travelling with?"

"With folly."

"Now, you fine potter, you have known how to sell your goods. *boyár*, take off your gay costume and your boots; and you, potter, take off your *kaftán* and your bast shoes. Put the peasant's smock on, *boyár*, and you, potter, put on the *boyár's* robes. You have sold your goods very finely, potter; you have done very little, and you have won much. But as for you, *boyár*, you were not able to keep your rank. Now, potter, were there any geese flying over Russia? Did you pluck a feather out of them, or did you leave them in peace?"

"No, I plucked them bald."

THE WITCH AND THE SISTER OF THE SUN

In a distant country, a country far away, once there lived a Tsar and Tsarítsa, who had a son, Iván Tsarévich, who was dumb from his birth. When he was twelve years old he went to the stable to the groom whom he loved, who always told him stories. But this time he was not to be told any.

"Iván Tsarévich," said the groom, "your mother will soon have a daughter, and you will have a sister. She will be a dreadful witch and will eat up your father and your mother and all their subjects. Go back home and ask your father to give you his best horse; mount that and ride away and follow your eyes if you would escape misfortune."

Iván Tsarévich ran up to his father and spoke for the first time in his life. The Tsar was so glad at this that he never asked what the Tsarévich wanted the horse for, but ordered the very best of his *Tabún* to be saddled for him.

Iván Tsarévich mounted the horse and rode away, following his eyes. He rode far, to a very great distance, and he came to two old seamstresses, and asked them if they would not let him live with them.

"We should be very glad to accept you, Iván Tsarévich," they replied, "but we shall not live much longer. We are breaking up this box and with our needles sewing it together again, and as soon as we have done that Death will come to us."

Then Iván Tsarévich wept and rode on farther. And he rode on, very very far, and came to Vertodúb. And he begged him, "Will you take me as your son?"

"I should be very glad to take you," Vertodúb replied,

" but, as soon as I have turned round all these oaks with all their roots, the hour will have come for me to die."

Then the Tsarévich wept yet more, and he rode farther on, and he came to Vertogór, and he made him the same request.

" I should be very glad to take you, Iván Tsarévich, but I too shall not live much longer," was the answer he received. " You see, I am placed here in order to turn these mountains round ; and when I have done with the last of them then I must die."

Then Iván Tsarévich wept bitter tears, and he rode yet farther. And at last he came to the Sister of the Sun. She gave him meat and drink and adopted him as a son. The Tsarévich had a fine time there. But still he was always dissatisfied, because he did not know what was going on at home. And so he clomb a lofty mountain, looked out to his own house, and saw that everything there had been eaten up, and only the walls were standing. Then he sighed and wept.

And when he came down from the mountain, the Sister of the Sun met him and asked, " Iván Tsarévich, why hast thou wept ? "

" It was the wind which was blowing something in my eye ! " And once again he began to weep.

And he went a second time into the mountain, and saw that only the walls of his house remained standing—everything had been eaten up. And he wept and returned home.

Again the Sister of the Sun met him : " Iván Tsarévich, why hast thou wept ? "

" It was the wind which was blowing something in my eye ! " And the Sun was angry, and forbade the wind to blow.

And he mounted the hill a third time, and this time he was forced to say why he was sad, and beg the Sister of the Sun for leave to go home to see what had been

happening, like a doughty youth. So she gave him a brush and comb and two apples to take with him. And, however old a man might be, if he only ate one apple, he would be young once more.

Iván ran away, and he found Vertogór, who had only one mountain left. So Iván Tsarévich took his brush, and threw it into the open field. And suddenly mountains grew up everywhere, and their summits and peaks pierced into the skies, and there were so many of them that no man could count them. Vertogór was then very happy and set about work gaily.

Iván Tsarévich met Vertodúb once more, and there were only three oaks left. So he threw the comb into the field, and then there rustled out of the earth a thick oak forest, every tree thicker than the other. And Vertodúb was then very joyous and set to work gaily.

And at last, after a journey long or short, Iván Tsarévich reached the old women, and he gave each of them an apple. They ate them, and they once more became young, and gave him a little handkerchief, which he need only shake, and a big lake would appear.

When Iván Tsarévich came home, his sister ran to him and caressed him. "Sit down, brother mine; play on the harp whilst I go and prepare dinner."

Iván Tsarévich sat down and began to finger the strings when a mouselet crept out of the corner and spoke with a human voice: "Run away, Tsarévich, as fast as you can. Your sister is now whetting her teeth."

Iván Tsarévich then left the room, sat on his horse, and went all the way back to the Sun. The mouselet ran up and down on the strings of the harp, and the sister never noticed that the brother had gone away. When she had sharpened her teeth, she ran into the room, but there was not a single soul to be seen there, even the mouselet had crept back into its hole. And the witch became furious, gnashed her teeth and made ready to

pursue Iván Tsarévich. Iván Tsarévich heard a noise behind him, looked, and saw his sister had almost caught him up, so he waved his handkerchief, and a deep lake rose behind him. Whilst the witch was swimming through the lake Iván Tsarévich flew a vast way, and she was swifter than he, and again came near.

Vertodúb guessed Iván was fleeing from his sister, and piled oaks on the way, whirled a vast mass of them in her path and she could not get through; she had at first to clear the road. So she gnawed and gnawed away, and at last made herself a path. But Iván Tsarévich in the meantime had gained ground. So she followed him farther, and she had almost caught him up.

When Vertogór saw what was happening, he seized hold of the highest mountain, piled it up on the road and stuck another on top of it. And the witch was very furious, and began climbing up, and in the meantime Iván Tsarévich got far and far away. But the witch soon got up and cried out: "This time you shall not escape me."

He had got into the palace of the Sister of the Sun, and cried out, "Sun, Sun! open your big windows." The Sun opened his window and Iván Tsarévich leaped in on his horse.

The witch asked him to give her her brother, but the Sun would not. Then the witch said, "Iván Tsarévich must put himself on one balance and I will put myself on the other, and if I am the heavier I will eat him up; and, if he is the heavier he shall lay me low."

So they went and set up the scales. First Iván Tsarévich sat down on it, then the witch on the other side; but as soon as ever she had put her foot into it the Tsarévich was hurled with such force into the house, that he flew right into the very bosom of the sky, into the chambers of the Sun, whilst the witch remained on the earth.

MÁRYA MORYÉVNA

In a certain kingdom, in a certain state, there once lived Iván Tsarévich, who had three sisters: one was called Márya Tsarévna, the second Ólga Tsarévna, and the third Ánna Tsarévna. Their mother and father had died: when they were dying they bade the son, "Whoever come first as a suitor for your sisters' hands, let them take them; do not keep them long with you." The Tsarévich buried his parents; and, in his grief, went with his sisters to walk in a green garden. Then a dark cloud appeared in the sky, and a fearful clap of thunder was heard. "Let us go home, sisters," said Iván Tsarévich.

Soon they reached the palace: the thunder rattled and the ceiling fell down, and the ceiling divided into two. And a clear-eyed Hawk came into the room, struck the ground, and turned himself into a fair, doughty youth: "Hail, Iván Tsarévich! before, I came to you as a guest, now I am coming to ask for your sister's hand: I wish to marry Márya Tsarévna."

"If you wish my sister, I will not say you nay: take her with God's blessing."

Márya Tsarévna agreed, and the Hawk married her and took her away to his own kingdom.

Then day followed day and hour followed hour. One whole year went by unheeded: Iván Tsarévich stayed with his sisters in the green garden. Then there came a cloud and there was thunder and lightning. "Let us go home, sisters," said the Tsarévich.

When they came to the palace there was a thunder-

clap, and the roof fell in and the ceiling was cleft in two, and an Eagle flew in, struck the ground and turned himself into a doughty youth, and said, "Hail, Iván Tsarévich! formerly I came to you as a guest, now I come to you as a suitor." And he asked for the hand of Ólga.

And Iván Tsarévich answered, "If Ólga Tsarévna pleases you, she may go to you—I will not withstand your will."

Ólga Tsarévna was willing, and married the Eagle: the Eagle laid hold of her and took her to his own kingdom.

One year further went by, and Iván Tsarévich said to his youngest sister, "Let us go and have a walk in the green garden," and they went for a little walk. And a cloud came over the sky with thunder and lightning. "Let us turn back, sister, home!"

So they turned back home, and they had hardly sat down when the thunder clapped and the ceiling was divided into two, and a Crow flew in. And the Crow struck the ground and turned himself into a doughty youth. The former suitors were fair enough in themselves, but he was fairer still. "Formerly I came to you as a guest, but now I come to you as a suitor: give me your sister Ánna."

"I will not withstand my sister's will; if you are in love with her she may have you."

And Ánna Tsarévna went with the Crow, and he took her to his own kingdom.

So Iván Tsarévich was there alone, and for one whole year he lived there without any sisters, and began to feel melancholy. "I will go," he said, "and seek my sisters." So he started out on the road. He went on and on and on. And there lay on the field an army of a great host conquered. And Iván asked them: "If there be any man alive here, let him call! Who slew this mighty host?"

And one man who was still alive replied: "All this mighty host was conquered by Márya Moryévna, the fair princess."

And Iván Tsarévich went on yet further, and he came upon white tents, and Márya Moryévna came to meet him, the fair queen.

"Hail," she said, "Tsarévich! where is God taking you? Is it at your will or perforce?"

And Iván Tsarévich answered her: "Doughty youths do not go perforce."

"Well, if you have no quest to accomplish, come and stay in my tents."

And Iván Tsarévich was glad of this, and he stayed two nights in the tents, fell in love with Márya Moryévna, and married her.

Márya Moryévna took him with her to her own kingdom, and they lived together for some time; and they thought of making ready for war; and so she handed all of her possessions over to Iván, and said: "Go everywhere, look at everything, only into this lumber-room you must not look."

But he was impatient: as soon as Márya Moryévna's back was turned, he at once opened the lumber-room, opened the door and looked in, and there Koshchéy the Deathless was hanging.

Koshchéy asked Iván Tsarévich, "Have pity on me: give me something to eat. I have been tortured here for ten years. I have eaten nothing, I have drunken nothing, and my throat is all dried up." Iván Tsarévich gave him a whole gallon of water: he drank it at a single gulp, and he still asked, "I am still thirsty: give me a gallon," and Iván gave him a second gallon, and yet a third. And when he had drunk the third, he recovered all his former strength, broke all his chains, shattered them all, all the twelve chains. "Thank you, Iván Tsarévich," Koshchéy the Deathless said. "Now you

will never again see Márya Moryévna any more!" and with a fearful flash of lightning he flew into the country, gathered up Márya Moryévna on the road, the fair Queen, snatched her up and took her to himself.

Iván Tsarévich wept bitterly, got ready and started on his road: "Come what may, I will seek out Márya Moryévna." And he went one day, and he went another day, and on the dawning of the third day he saw a wonderful palace, and in front of the palace there was an oak, and on the oak there sat a clear-eyed hawk.

And the Hawk flew down from the oak, struck the ground, turned into a doughty youth, and cried out, "O my beloved brother: how is the Lord dealing with you?"

And Márya Tsarévna came out, went to meet Iván Tsarévich, asked him how he was, and began to tell him all her own story.

So the Tsarévich abode as their guest for three days, and then said, "I cannot stay with you any longer: I am going to seek my wife Márya Moryévna the fair Queen."

"This will be a hard search for you," answered the Hawk. "At least leave a silver spoon here; we can gaze on it and think of you."

Iván Tsarévich left his silver spoon with them, and set out on his road.

So he went on one day and a second day, and at the dawning of the third day he saw a palace fairer than the first, and in front of the palace there was an oak, and an eagle sat on the oak: the Eagle flew down from the tree, struck the earth, turned into a doughty youth and cried: "Rise, Ólga Tsarévna, our dear brother has arrived."

Ólga Tsarévna at once came to meet him, began kissing and welcoming him, asking how he was, and they told of all they had lived and done.

Iván Tsarévich stayed with them three little days,

and then said, "I can no longer be your guest: I am going seeking my wife, Márya Moryévna the fair Princess."

And the Eagle answered: "It will be an evil quest. Leave us your silver fork; we will look at it and think of you."

So he left his silver fork, and he went on the road.

And a day went by and a second, and at the dawn of the third day he saw a palace fairer than the first two. And in front of the palace there was an oak, and on the oak there perched a crow. And the Crow flew down from the oak, struck the earth, turned into a doughty youth, and cried out, "Ánna Tsarévna, come out as fast as you can: our brother has arrived."

Then Ánna Tsarévna came out, met him joyously, began to kiss and to welcome him, asking him how he was. And they spoke of all they had lived and done.

After three days Iván Tsarévich said, "I can stay no longer with you; I am going to seek my wife, Márya Moryévna, the fair Queen."

"This will be a hard search for you," the Crow said. "At least leave us your silver snuff-box; we can gaze on it and think of you."

So Iván Tsarévich left them his silver snuff-box, and set out on his road.

Then a day went and another day, and on the third day he at last reached Márya Moryévna. When she saw her beloved through the window, she rushed out to him, flung herself at his neck, wept, and said, "Oh! Iván Tsarévich, why did you not obey me? Why did you look into the lumber-room and let Koshchéy the Deathless out?"

"Forgive me, Márya Moryévna; let bygones be bygones: come away with me now, whilst Koshchéy the Deathless is away: possibly he may not catch us up."

So they went away.

Now Koshchéy was out hunting. Towards evening he returned home, and his horse stumbled. "Why, you sorry jade, are you stumbling, or is it some evil that you fear?"

And the horse answered: "Iván Tsarévich has arrived, and has taken away Márya Moryévna."

"Can one catch them up?"

"You can sow wheat, wait until it grows up, harvest it, thresh it, turn it into flour, make five stones of bread, eat the bread, and then set out on the hunt, and we shall succeed."

Koshchéy leapt on the horse, caught up Iván Tsarévich. "Now," he said, "for the first time I will let you go for your doughtyhood, as you fed me with water; for the second time I will let you go; for the third time, take care: I will tear you to morsels." And he took Márya Moryévna from him, took her away, and Iván Tsarévich sat on the stone and cried.

And he cried and he cried, and again came back to Márya Moryévna. Koshchéy the Deathless was not at home: "Let us start, Márya Moryévna."

"Oh, Iván Tsarévich, he will catch us up."

"Well, let him; still we shall have one or two hours together."

So they started, and off they went.

Koshchéy the Deathless came back home, and his good horse stumbled under him. "Why, you sorry jade, are you stumbling, or is it some evil thing which you fear?"

And the horse answered, "Iván Tsarévich has again arrived, and has taken Márya Moryévna away."

"Can one catch them up?"

"It would be possible to sow barley and to wait until it grows up, reap it, thresh it, to brew beer, drink it until you were drunk, sleep out your sleep and then to go on the hunt, and we should still succeed."

Koshchéy leaped on his horse, caught up Iván Tsarévich, and said, "I said you were not to see anything more of Márya Moryévna!" and he took her away with him.

So Iván Tsarévich was again left alone, and he wept bitterly; and once again he returned to Márya Moryévna, and this time too Koshchéy was not at home. "Let us go, Márya Moryévna!"

"Oh, Iván Tsarévich, he will catch us up and he will tear you to bits."

"Let him tear me to bits; I cannot live without you."

So they got ready, and off they went.

Koshchéy the Deathless returned home, and under him his good horse stumbled. "Why do you stumble, you sorry jade, or is it some evil that you fear?"

"Iván Tsarévich has arriyed, and has taken Márya Moryévna with him."

Koshchéy leaped on his horse, caught up Iván Tsarévich, broke him up into tiny bits, put them into a tar cask, took this cask, locked it with iron bolts and threw it into the blue sea. And he took Márya Moryévna away with him.

At the same time the brothers-in-law of Iván Tsarévich looked at their silver ornaments and found they had turned black. "Oh," they said, "evidently some disaster has befallen him!" The Eagle rushed into the blue sea, dragged out the cask to the shore, and the Hawk flew for the Water of Life, and the Crow flew for the Water of Death. Then they all three met at a single spot and broke up the cask, took out the bits of Iván Tsarévich, washed them, laid them together as was fit: then the Crow sprinkled him with the Water of Death, and the body grew together and was one; and the Hawk sprinkled him with the Water of Life, and Iván Tsarévich shivered, sat up and said, "Oh, what a long sleep I have had!"

"But your sleep would have been very much longer if we had not been there," answered the brothers-in-law. "Now you must come and be our guest!"

"No, brothers, I must go and seek Márya Moryévna."

So he came to her and said, "Go and find out from Koshchéy the Deathless where he got such a fine horse!"

Then Márya Moryévna looked out for a good opportunity, and asked Koshchéy the Deathless.

Koshchéy answered, "Beyond thrice-nine lands, in the thrice-tenth kingdom, beyond the river of fire, lives the Bába Yagá. She has a mare on which every day she rides round the whole of the world. She has many splendid mares. I was there for three days as a herd, and she would not let me have the mare; but she gave me one of the foals."

"How can one cross the river of fire?"

"I have a kerchief: if you shake it to the right three times a lofty bridge rises and the fires cannot overreach it."

Márya Moryévna listened, told Iván Tsarévich all about it, and he took the cloth away. Iván Tsarévich crossed the river of fire and he reached the Bába Yagá: but journeying afar, neither eating nor drinking. A sea-bird came to meet him with her young. Iván Tsarévich asked if he might eat one of her chicks.

"Do not eat it," the sea-bird said; "at some time I shall be of service to you, Iván Tsarévich."

Then he went farther, and he was in a wood, and he saw a bee-hive. "Perhaps," he said, "I may take a little honey."

Then the queen-bee answered him, "Do not touch my honey, Iván Tsarévich; at some time or other I shall be of service to you."

So he did not touch the honey, but went farther. Then he met a lioness with her whelps. "May I eat this lion-whelp? I am so hungry?"

"Do not touch it, Iván Tsarévich," the lioness said; "at some time or other I shall be of service to you."

"Very well; it shall be as you will."

So he went on hungry, and he went on and on and on, and at last he reached the house of the Bába Yagá. Round the house there were twelve poles, and on eleven of the poles there were the skulls of men: only one as yet was untenanted.

"Hail, *bábushka!*" he said.

"Hail, Iván Tsarévich!" she replied: "what have you come for? By your own good will or for need?"

"I have come to earn of you a knightly horse."

"Very well, Iván Tsarévich: you are to serve me not one year, but only three days. If you can guard my mares, I will give you a knightly horse; if you cannot, do not be angry, but your head must also lie on the last of the stakes."

Iván Tsarévich agreed, and Bába Yagá gave him drink and food and bade him set to work. As soon as ever he had driven the mares into the field, they all turned their tails and ran in the meadows so far that the Tsarévich could not trace them with his eyes: and thus they were all lost. Then he sat down and wept, and became melancholy, and sat down on a stone and went to sleep.

The sun was already setting when the sea-bird flew to him, woke him up and said, "Arise, Iván Tsarévich—all the mares have gone home."

The Tsarévich got up, turned back home; but Bába Yagá was angry with her mares. "Why have you all come home?"

"Why should we not come home? the birds flew down from every quarter of the sky and almost clawed out our eyes."

"Well, to-morrow do not stray in the meadows, but scatter into the dreamy forest."

So Iván Tsarévich passed that night; and next day

Bába Yagá said to him, "Look, Iván Tsarévich, if you do not keep the mares well, if you lose one, then your false head shall nod up and down on the stake."

So then he drove all the mares to the field, and this time they turned their tails, and they ran into the dreamy woods. And once again the Tsarévich sat on the stone and wept and wept and went to sleep, and the sun began to rest on the woods when the lioness ran up and said, "Get up, Iván Tsarévich—all the mares have been collected." Then Iván Tsarévich got up and went home.

And Bába Yagá was angry that the mares had come home, and she called out to her mares, "Why have you all come home?"

And they answered, "How should we not come home?—wild beasts from all the four quarters of the world assembled round us and almost tore us to bits."

"Well, you go to-morrow into the blue sea."

Once again Iván passed the night there, and the next day Bába Yagá sent her mares to feed. "If you do not guard them, then your bold head shall hang on the pole."

He drove the mares into the field, and they at once turned tail and vanished from his eyes and ran into the blue sea and stood up to their necks in the water. So Iván Tsarévich sat on the stone, wept and went to sleep. And the sun was already setting on the woods when the bee flew up to him and said: "Get up, Iván Tsarévich—all the mares have been gathered together. But, when you return home, do not appear before Bába Yagá; go into the stable and hide behind the crib. There there is a mangy foal who will be rolling in the dung: steal him; and, at the deep of midnight, leave the house."

Iván Tsarévich got up, went into the stable, and lay behind the crib.

Bába Yagá made a tremendous stir and cried out to her mares: "Why did you come back?"

"How should we not come back?—all the bees from every part of the world, visible and invisible, flew round us, and they stung us till our blood flowed."

Bába Yagá went to sleep; and that same night Iván Tsarévich stole the mangy steed from its stall, mounted it and flew to the fiery river. He reached that river, waved the cloth three times to the right; and, at once, from some strange source, a lofty, splendid bridge hung all the way over. The Tsarévich crossed the bridge, waved the cloth to the left twice, and all that was left of the bridge was a thin thread.

In the morning Bába Yagá woke up and she could not see the mangy foal, so she hunted to the chase: with all her strength she leapt into her iron mortar and she chased after with the pestle, and very soon she was on their track. When she came to the river of fire, she looked across and thought, "Ah ha ha! a fine bridge!" Then she went on to the bridge; but as soon as she got on to the bridge it snapped, and Bába Yagá slipped into the river, and it was a savage death she had.

Iván Tsarévich fed his foal on the green, and a splendid horse grew out of him; then the Tsarévich arrived at the palace of Márya Moryévna. She rushed out, fell upon his neck and said, "How has God blessed you?" And he told her how it had gone with him. "I am frightened, Iván Tsarévich; if Koshchéy catches us up you will again be torn to atoms."

"No, he will not catch us up now; I have a fine knightly horse which flies like a bird." So they sat on the horse and went.

Koshchéy the Deathless came back home, and his horse stumbled. "Oh, you sorry jade, why do you stumble, or is it that you fear some evil?"

"Iván Tsarévich has arrived, and has taken away Márya Moryévna."

"Can one catch them up?"

"God knows; now Iván Tsarévich has a knightly horse better than me."

"No, I will not stand it," Koshchéy the Deathless said. "We will up and after him!"

And, sooner or later, so soon he caught up Iván Tsarévich, and he leapt to him and was going to cleave him with his curved sabre; but then the steed of Iván Tsarévich kicked Koshchéy the Deathless with all his might, and clove in his head, and the Tsarévich struck him down with his club. Then the Tsarévich gathered together a mass of timber, set fire to it, burnt Koshchéy the Deathless on the pile and scattered the dust to the winds.

Márya Moryévna then sat on Koshchéy's steed, and Iván Tsarévich on his own, and the two went and stayed as guests, first of all with the Crow, then with the Eagle, and lastly with the Hawk. Wherever they went they were joyously received. "Oh! Iván Tsarévich, I am so glad to see you! We never expected to see you back. And your work has not been in vain; such a beauty as Márya Moryévna might be sought for all over the world and you would not have found any other."

So they were as guests and junketed well, and arrived into their own kingdom, reached it and began to live a life of joy enduring and to drink good mead.

THE REALM OF STONE

In a certain kingdom, in a certain state, once there lived a soldier who had served long and faithfully and knew all about the Tsar's service, the reviews, and always came up to parade looking clean and smart. The last year of his service came along, and, to his ill-luck, his superior officers, great and small, did not like him, and as a result he was soundly thrashed. This grieved the soldier, and he thought of deserting. So, with his wallet on his back and his gun on his shoulder, he began to bid farewell to his comrades, who asked him, "Where are you going? Do you want to enter a battalion?"

"Do not ask me, my brothers; just buckle my wallet firmly on, and do not think evil of me."

Then the good youth set forth whither his eyes gazed. May be far, may be near, he went on and on, and arrived at another kingdom, saw the sentry-guard and asked "May I rest here?"

So the sentry-guard told the Corporal, the Corporal told the Officer, and the Officer told the General, and the General told the King himself. And the King ordered the soldier to be brought before him in order that he might see him with his own eyes. And the soldier appeared before him in his proper regimentals, with musket on his shoulder, as though he were rooted to the ground.

Then the King asked him, "Tell me on your faith and oath, whence are you and where are you going?"

"Your kingly Majesty, do not have me punished!

Bid the word be not spoken." And he told the whole story to the King, and asked to be admitted to the service.

"Very well," said the King; "come and serve me as sentry in my garden. All is not well in my garden: somebody is breaking my best-loved trees, and you must endeavour to preserve them; and, as to the reward for your labour, you shall not fare ill."

So the sentry agreed and stood as sentry in the garden. For a year, for two years, he served on, and all went well. But in the third year, as he went out, he went to look in the garden, and saw that half of the best trees had been shattered. "My goodness!" he thought to himself, "what a fearful misfortune! If the King observes this he will instantly have me pinioned and hanged." So he took his gun in his hand, went to a tree, and began pondering very hard. Then he heard a crackling and a rumbling. So the good youth glimpsed down, and he saw a fearful, huge bird flying into the garden and overthrowing the trees. The soldier fired at the bird, but could not kill it; and could only wing it on the right wing, and three feathers fell out of the wing, but the bird took to flight. After him the soldier dashed. The bird's wings were swift, and very speedily it flew into a pit and vanished from sight. But the soldier was not afraid and dived down after him into the pit, fell into the deep crevasse, fell down flat and lay for whole days unconscious.

When he came to himself he got up and he looked, and he found himself in the subterranean world, where there was the same light as was here. "I suppose there are people here as well," he thought. So he went on and on, and saw a great city and a sentry-box in front of it, and in it a sentry. He began to ask him questions, but never an answer, never a movement! So he took him by the hand, and found that he was all stone. Then the

soldier went into the sentry-box: and there were many people, and they stood or sat, only they had all been turned to stone. He then set to wandering in the streets, and everywhere it was the same—not a single live soul to be seen! Soon he came to a decorated, raised, clean-cut palace, marched in there, and looked. Rich rooms; and food and drink of all sorts were on the table; and all was silent and empty. So the soldier ate and drank; sat down to have a rest. Suddenly it seemed to him as though some one had come up the steps. So he shouldered his musket and went to the door.

A fair Tsarévna was coming in with her maids of honour and attendants. The soldier bowed down to her, and she curtsied to him kindly.

"Hail, soldier!" she said. "By what ill doom have you fallen down here?"

So the soldier began to tell her. "I was engaged as sentry in the imperial garden, and a big bird came and flew round the trees and shattered them. I watched him, fired at him, and three feathers fell out of his wing. I began to chase after him, and arrived here."

Then she answered, "That bird is my own sister: she does much evil of every kind and has set an ill doom on my kingdom, having turned all my people to stone. Listen! here is a book for you. Stand here and read it from evening time until the hour when the cocks crow. Whatever suffering may come over you, do your duty; read the book, keep it close to you that they may not tear it from you, otherwise you will not remain alive. If you can stay here for three nights I will come and marry you."

"Very well," said the soldier.

Soon it became dark, and he took the book and began reading it. Then there was a knocking and a thundering, and an entire host appeared in the palace. All his former superiors appeared in front of the soldier, scolded

him and threatened him with the punishment of death. And they got their guns and were levelling them at him: but the soldier never looked at them, never let the book drop out of his hand, and simply went on reading. Then the cocks crowed, and it all vanished!

On the next night it was still more terrible, and on the third night worst of all. All the executioners came up with their saws, axes, clubs, and wanted to break his bones, put him on the rack, burn him at the stake, and were devising any means of getting the book out of his hand. It was fearful torture, and the soldier could hardly endure it. Then the cocks crowed, and the demons vanished!

At the same time the entire kingdom awoke, and in the streets and in the houses people bestirred themselves, and in the palace the Tsarévna and her generals and her suite appeared, and all began to thank the soldier, and they made him their king.

On the next day he married the fair Princess, and lived with her in love and joy.

. . . . . .

So the soldier, the peasant's son, became a Tsar, and he still reigns.

He is a very good king over his subjects, and is very generous to other soldiers.

THE STORY OF TSAR ANGÉY AND HOW HE SUFFERED FOR PRIDE

ONCE there was in the city of Filuyán[1] a Tsar named Angéy, who was very famous. And, in course of time, it came upon him to stand in the church at the Divine Service at the reading of the sacred Gospel by the priest, when the priest was reading those verses in the Gospel in which it is said: *He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek.* And when the Tsar heard this he grew angry, and the Tsar spoke: "This writing is falsely written; the word of the Gospel is untrue." And the Tsar said: "I am very rich and famous. How shall I be put down from my seat and the humble and meek be exalted?" And then he was filled with fear. And the Tsar bade the priest be confined in a dungeon, and he bade that page be torn out of the Gospel Book. And the Tsar went to his palace and began to eat and drink and be merry.

When the Tsar saw a deer in the fields, he went up and he took his young men with him, and he hunted him and almost captured the deer; and the deer was very beautiful. And the Tsar spoke to his champions: "Do ye stand here. I will go, and I alone will take the deer alive." And he hunted after him, and they swam across the stream. The Tsar tied his horse to an oak, and tied his garments around him, and swam naked across the stream. Then the deer became invisible, and an angel of God stood by the Tsar's horse in the image of Tsar

[1] A mythical city, very probably derived from Θύλη.

Angéy and spoke to the youths. "The deer has swum across the stream."

And he went with the youths into the Tsar's city to his palace.

But Tsar Angéy went back for his horse, but he could neither find his steed nor his apparel, and he remained there naked and began to think. And Angéy went up to his city, and he saw shepherds feeding oxen, and he asked them: "Ye lesser brothers, shepherds, where have ye seen my horse and my garments?" And the shepherds asked him: "Who art thou?" He said to them: "I am Tsar Angéy." And the shepherds spake: "Wicked boaster! how darest thou call thyself the Tsar, for we have seen Tsar Angéy, who has just ridden into his city with five youths!" And they began to rebuke him and to beat him with whips and scourges. And the Tsar began to weep and to sob. The shepherds drove him afar, and he went naked into his city.

The trade folk of the city met him on his way and asked him: "Man, why art thou naked?" And he said to them: "Robbers have stolen my garments." And they gave him a poor and tattered dress. He took it and bowed down to them, and he went unto his city, and arrived in his town, and he asked a widow if he might stay there the night, and he questioned her, saying: "Say, my mistress, who is the Tsar here?" And she replied to him: "Art thou not a man of our country?" And she said: "Our Tsar is Tsar Angéy." He asked: "For how many years has he been Tsar?" And she said: "For years five and thirty."

He then wrote a letter with his own hand to the Tsarítsa, that he had secret things and thoughts to speak of with her; and he bade a woman take this letter to the queen. The Tsarítsa received the letter and had it read to her. He signed it as her husband, Tsar Angéy. And a great fear fell upon her, and in her fear she began

to speak: "How can this poor man name me his wife? I must inform the Tsar and have him punished." And she bade him be beaten with whips mercilessly, without informing the Tsar. He was pitilessly beaten, and was scarcely left alive, and could hardly leave the town. He wept and sobbed, and remembered the words of the Gospel: *He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek.* And he spoke to a pope of this, how he had profaned the Sacred Book, and had sent the priest into the dark dungeon, and had gone a long, long way.

And the Tsarítsa spoke to the angel who was taking the shape of the Tsar: "Thou, my dear lord, for one year hast not slept with me. How can I, then, be thine?" And the Tsar spake to her: "I have made a covenant with God that for three years I will not sleep with thee nor share thy bed." And he left her and went into the Tsar's palace.

Angéy the Tsar arrived in an unknown town and engaged himself with a peasant to reap the harvest; and he did not know how to do a peasant's work; and the peasant discharged him, and he began to weep and sob, and went on his way from that city. And poor men met him on the road. He said to them: "Will ye take me up with ye? I am now a poor man, and do not know how to work, and I am ashamed to beg. What ye bid of me I will do. I will work for you." And they accepted him and gave him a burden to carry. And they went to lie at night, and they bade him heat the bath, carry water, and lay the bed. And Tsar Angéy wept bitterly: "Woe to me! What have I done! I was wroth with the Sovereign, and He has deprived me of my kingdom and has brought me to ruin, and I have suffered all this through the word of the Gospel."

In the morning the poor men got up, and they arrived at his own city of Filuyán. And they reached the abode

of the Tsar and began to beg for alms. At this time the Tsar was holding a mighty feast, and he bade the poor be summoned into the palace, bade them be fed sufficiently, and he bade the food of the poor men be taken into the Tsar's palace and put into a special room. And, when the Tsar's feast was over and the *boyárs*[1] and the guests had all separated, the angel who had taken the form of the Tsar Angéy came to him in the palace where Angéy the Tsar, was dining with the beggars: "Dost thou know of a proud and mighty Tsar, how he profaned the word of the Gospel?" And he began to teach him and to instruct him before all of the world, that he must not profane the word of the Gospel, and must show respect for the priests, and must not upraise himself, but must be kindly and inclined to the ways of peace.

[1] Earls.

THE FEAST OF THE DEAD

SOME girls were out at night for the evening, and arranged for an evening party. They went out to get some *vódka*. There were bones lying on the road. "Ho!" they said, "bones, bones, come and be our guests: we are having an evening party."

So they went back home, brought the *vódka*, and stepped in over the threshold.

But the bones came and sat at the table just like men, and said to the maidens, "Now give us the brandy."

So the girls gave them brandy.

"Give us bread!"

So they gave them bread.

They all sat down to eat, and one maiden dropped the meat.

Then the bones began lifting and stretching their legs under the bench. The girls tried to run away; and the bones raced after them. The bones caught one girl up, and broke her across their knees. The other girls made their escape into the loft; one girl hid behind the water-butt.

The bones ran up to the loft and asked: "What is there up there?"

"God's taper."

"But down there?"

"The Devil's poker," she answered.

So the bones hauled the second girl out and strangled her.

THE QUARRELSOME WIFE

"FATHER, I should like to marry! Mother, I should like to marry, I should really," said the youth.

"Well then, my child—marry."

So he married, and chose a lanky, black, squinting wife. She would have pleased Satan more than the clear-eyed hawk, and it was no good frothing at anybody: he was the only person in the wrong. So he lived with her and wrung his tears out with his fist.

One day he went out where audiences were being given, stood there, and came home.

"Wherever have you been sauntering?" asked his squint-eyed wife. "What have you seen?"

"Oh, they say that a new Tsar has come on the throne and has issued a new *úkaz* that wives are to command their husbands!"

He only meant to joke, but she sprang up, pulled his whiskers and said, "Go to the stream and wash the shirts, take the broom and sweep the house, then go and sit by the cradle and rock the child, cook the supper and grill and bake the cakes."

The man wanted to answer, "What are you talking about, woman? That is not a man's work." Then he looked at her, and he froze cold and his tongue clave to his throat.

So he got the washing together, baked the cakes, swept the cottage, and was no good for anything.

One year went by, and a second, and the good youth got rather weary of the yoke. But what on earth was he to do? He had married and he had tied himself for

all eternity, and, may-be, his entire life would go by in this misery. From sheer wretchedness he contrived himself this contrivance. In the forest there was a deep pit of which neither end nor bottom could be seen. So he took and closed it up on the top with stakes, and strewed it over with straw. Then he came up to his wife: "My dear wife, you don't know that there is a treasure in the forest. It simply moans and groans with gold, and will not give itself up to me. It said, 'Send for your wife.'"

"Ha, ha! let us go: I will take it, and you say nothing about it."

So they went into the wood. "Sssh, woman, that is hollow ground out of which the treasure comes forth."

"Oh, what a fool you are of a peasant, frightened of everything! This is how I run up to it." So she ran up to the straw and was precipitated into the pit.

"Now, off you go," said the peasant; "I am now going to have a rest."

So he had a rest for a month, and a second month, but he soon became melancholy without his squint-eyed wife. So he went into the forest, and he went into the field, and he went to the river, and he could only think of her. "Possibly by now she has become quiet. Possibly I will take her out again." So he took a withy, let it into the ground, and he listened: she was sitting there. He drew it up, looked at it very near, looked very carefully, and in the basket there was a little devil sitting. At this the peasant was frightened, and almost let the cord fall out of his hands.

Then the little devil begged him and cried in his ear: "Do let me go, peasant. Your wife has been torturing and oppressing us. Tell me what to do: I will be your faithful servant. I will this very instant run into the *boyárs'* palace; I will in an instant cook the grill; by day and night I will knock and drive away the *boyárs*. You are to declare yourself a doctor to go and to call on

me. I will leap up on the spot and vanish. Now, go and dig; shovel up your money."

So the peasant let the devil leap out, shake himself and vanish away. And from that day everything went upside down in the *boyárs'* house, and they began looking for some doctor: the good youth dubbed himself a doctor, exorcised the devil, and received good pay. Soon the rumour went forth that in the prince's palace, in the lofty castle home, familiar spirits were appearing, and never gave the princes rest. They sent for hunters in every part of the earth, and summoned them to assemble doctors. They collected from all the kings: it was no good. The familiar spirits still knocked and groaned.

At last our doctor arrived, recognised his old acquaintance, called for his little devil, and the little devil never thought of running away, and he would not leave the prince's palace. "Wait a little, if this is the case," cried the doctor. "Ho, my squint-eyed wife, just come up here!" Then the little devil could not stand it and took to his heels out of the stove.

So the doctor received honour and praise, and earned a mine of money. But it is said, not untruly, that, even in Paradise, it is sad to live alone. For the good youth grew melancholy, and he again went to seek his squint-eyed wife. So he let down the basket right away into the pit. There the woman was sitting, and he hauled her to the top. As soon as ever she came near she was breathing out fire and fury, gnashing her teeth and brandishing her fists. The peasant's hands shook with fear, and the withy broke, and the squint-eyed woman clashed down as before into Hell.

ELIJAH THE PROPHET AND ST. NICHOLAS

ONCE, a long time ago, there lived a peasant. He always observed St. Nicholas' day, but never, never, that of St. Elias; he even worked on it. He used to say a *Te Deum* to Nicholas, and burn a taper, but never gave as much as a thought to the Prophet Elijah.

One day Elijah and Nicholas were walking through this peasant's fields, going along and surveying; and the ears were so large, so full, that it warmed one's heart to look at them!

"What a fine crop this will be!" said Nicholas. "Yes, and he's a fine fellow, a good, brave peasant, pious; he remembers God, and reveres the Holy Saints. Whatever he turns his hand to shall prosper."

"Ha, let's have a look, brother," Elijah demurred. "Will there be so much over? My lightnings shall glint and my hail beat his field down; then your peasant shall learn right, and regard my name-day."

So they wrangled and argued, and at last agreed to go each his own way.

St. Nicholas at once went off to the peasant, and said: "Go and sell the Father by St. Elias' all your standing corn: not a blade will be left; it will be destroyed by hail."

Up the peasant dashed to the pope: "Oh, *bátyushka*, won't you buy all my standing corn? I'll sell you my whole field; I am so short of money; take it and give it me. Do buy it, Father; I'll sell it cheap."

They haggled and bargained, and at last agreed. The peasant took his cash and went home.

Time went by—not much, nor little; a heavy thundrous cloud gathered, and, with frightsome lightning and hail, played on the peasant's field, cut through his crops like a scythe, and left not one blade to tell the tale.

Next day, Elijah and Nicholas were faring through, and Elijah said: "Look how I've blasted the peasant's field!"

"The peasant's field? No, my brother, no; you've done your work thoroughly; but it belongs to the pope by St. Elias, not to the peasant."

"What! That pope?"

"Oh, yes; about a week ago the peasant sold the field to the pope, and got hard cash for it! And the pope is crying over the spilt money."

"That won't do," said Elijah; "I will grow the meadow anew—'twill be as good as it was."

They had their talk out and went on their way.

Up went St. Nicholas to the peasant once again. "Go and see the pope," he said, "and redeem your field; you won't lose by it."

The peasant went to see the pope. "The Lord has grievously afflicted you, has smitten your field with hail, as smooth as a board. Let's share the cost of it; I will take back my field, and to relieve your loss will return you half the money."

Oh, how glad the pope was to consent! They shook hands on it at once.

Meanwhile, somehow or other, the peasant's field righted itself; new shoots sprang up out of the old roots, the rain poured down on them, and nourished the earth; wonderful fresh corn grew up, lofty and thick; not a weed to be seen; and the ears were so full that they bowed down to earth. The little sun warmed them, and the rye was warmed through, and waved like a field of gold. The peasant bound up sheaf after sheaf, built rick after rick; carted it away and stacked it.

Just then Elijah and St. Nicholas were once more passing by. Elijah looked blithely at the field and said: "Just look, Nicholas, what a blessing I have wrought! This is my reward to the pope, and he'll never forget it all his life."

"The pope! No, brother; it is a great boon, but then this is the peasant's field; the pope hasn't a rod of it!"

"Wha-at?"

"It is true. After the meadow had been battered by hail, the peasant went up to the pope and bought it back at half price."

"Stop a bit," said the Prophet Elijah, "I'll take all the good out of it; out of all the peasant's ricks he shall not thresh more than six gallons at a time."

"Here, this looks bad," thought St. Nicholas, and instantly went to see the peasant, and said: "See to it; when you start threshing, never take more than a sheaf at a time on the threshing-floor."

So the peasant set to threshing, and he got six gallons out of every sheaf; all his granaries and lofts were full up with rye, and still there was much left over; he built new storehouses, and filled them full to the flush.

But one day Elijah the Prophet and St. Nicholas were passing by his courtyard, and Elijah glanced up and said: "Why has he built these new granaries? How can he stock them all?"

"They're full up," St. Nicholas replied.

"How did he get so much grain?"

"Oho! Every sheaf yielded him six gallons, and, as soon as he started threshing, he brought them in sheaf by sheaf."

"Oh, my brother Nicholas!" Elijah guessed: "you must have told him what to do!"

"Well, I thought it all out, and was going to say . . ."

"What are you after? It's all your work. Never mind; your peasant shall still have a reminder of me."

"What will you do?"

"I shall not tell you this time!"

"Well, if evil is to be, it will come."

Nicholas thought, and again went to the peasant, told him to buy two tapers, one big and one small, and gave him instructions.

Next day Elijah the Prophet and St. Nicholas were out together in the guise of wanderers, and the peasant happened to meet them, carrying two waxen candles—one big one that cost a rouble, and a little one that cost a copek.

"Where are you going to, peasant?" St. Nicholas said.

"Oh, I am going to light the rouble taper to the Prophet Elijah; he has been so charitable to me. My field was ravaged by hail, so he intervened, *bátyushka*, and gave me a crop twice as good."

"For whom is the farthing dip?"

"Oh, for St. Nicholas!" the peasant said, and pursued his way.

"There you are, Elijah," said St. Nicholas: "you said I gave everything away to the peasant; now you see what the truth is."

And with this the dispute was ended: Elijah the Prophet was reconciled, and ceased persecuting the peasant with hail-storms, so that he lived a merry life from that day and honoured both name-days equally.

THE PRINCESS TO BE KISSED AT A CHARGE

We still say that we are clever, but our elders go and quarrel with us and say, "No, we had more sense than you." But the tale tells that, even when our grandfathers had not learned their lessons and our great-great-great-great-grandfathers had not been born, in a certain kingdom, in a certain land, once there lived an old man who had taught his three sons reading and writing.

"Now, children," he said to them, "I shall die; do you come and read prayers over my grave."

"Very well, *bátyushka*," the three sons answered. And the two elder brothers were indeed fine lads, and they grew up fine stout fellows; but the youngest, Vanyúshka,[1] was under-sized, like a starved duckling, and flat-chested. The old man, their father, died.

Just about then a decree was issued by the Tsar that his daughter, Eléna Tsarévna the Fair, had ordered a temple to be built for her, with twelve columns and twelve wreaths. She was going to sit in this temple on a lofty throne, and was going to wait for the bridegroom—the valiant man who should on a flying horse, at a single spring, kiss her on the lips. All the young folks were bustling about, washing themselves clean, combing their hair, and considering to whom should the great honour fall.

"Brothers," Vanyúshka said, "our father is dead: who of us will go and read prayers on his grave?"

"Whoever wishes may go," answered the brothers.

So the youngest went. But the elders got ready and mounted their horses, curled their hair, dyed their hair; and all their kinsmen gathered round.

[1] Diminutive of Iván; so too Ványa.

Then the second night came: "Brothers, I read the prayers last night," Ványa said; "it's your turn; which of you will go?"

"Any one who wishes may go; don't interfere with us."

They gave their hats a knowing tilt, whooped and shouted, flew about, and rushed and galloped abroad on the open fields; and once again Ványa read the prayers; and so, too, on the third night. But the brothers saddled their horses, combed out their whiskers, and got ready on the very morrow to try their prowess in front of the eyes of Eléna the Fair. "What about our youngest brother?" they thought.

"Never mind about him; he will only disgrace us and make people smile: let us go by ourselves." So they started.

But Ványa also very much wanted to look at Princess Eléna the Fair, and so he wept sorely, and he went to his father's grave, and his father heard him in his last home, and he came up to him, shook off the grey earth from his forehead, and said, "Do not grieve, Vanyúshka; I will aid you in your sorrow." Then the old man got up, whistled and halloed with a young man's voice, with a nightingale's trill; and from some source or other a horse ran up, and the earth trembled, and from his nostrils and from his ears flames issued forth. He breathed smoke, and stood in front of the old man as though he were rooted to the ground, and asked him, "What do you wish?"

Ványa mounted the horse by one ear, dismounted it by the other, and turned into so fine a youth as no tale can tell and no pen can write. He sat on the horse, bent over sideways; and he flew like your hawk over there, straight to the palace of Eléna the Fair Tsarévna. He stretched out, leaped on, and he did not reach two of the crowns. He again made an effort, flew up, jumped; there was only one wreath left. He made

one more effort, turned round once more, and, as fire leaps to the eyes, he instantly kissed and smacked Eléna the Fair on the lips. "Who is it! Who is it! Catch him!" For his very trace had vanished. Then he leapt back to his father's grave, and he let his horse free into the open field; and he then bowed down to the earth and asked advice of his father, and the old man gave him advice. Ványa went back home as though he had never been there; and the brothers told him where they had been, what they had done and seen; and he listened as though he had never heard of it before.

There was another bout next day, and you could never see an end of the *boyárs* and the lords seated at the royal palace. The elder brothers started out, and the younger brother set out on foot secretly and quietly, just as though he had never kissed the Tsarévna, and he stopped in his distant corner. Eléna Tsarévna was asking for her bridegroom; Eléna Tsarévna was wishing to show him to the whole world, desiring to give him the half of her kingdom; but never a bridegroom appeared. They were looking for him in the midst of the *boyárs*, in the midst of the generals; and they went to them all, but they could not find him. But Ványa looked on and smiled, and waited until his bride came to him. For he said, "I won her like a knight; now she is to love me in my *kaftán*."

So she got up, looked out of the open windows, glanced through them all, and then she saw and recognised her bridegroom, took him to herself, and soon the betrothal took place. And oh, what a fine young man he was—so sensible, brave, and so handsome! He used to sit on his flying horse, undo his cap, put his arms a-kimbo; and he seemed like a king, like the reigning king; and you looked on, and you would never have imagined that at one time he could ever have been poor Vanyúshka.

THE WOOD SPRITE

One day the daughter of a pope, without asking leave of her mother or her father, went for a walk into the wood, and utterly lost her way. Three years went by. Now, in this wood, in which her mother and father lived, there was a bold hunter. On every holy day he used to go hunting with his gun and his dog in the dreamy forest.

One day he went into the wood, and the hairs of his dog bristled up. Then the hunter looked, and in front of him there was a stump on the wood path, and a Peasant stood on the stump and was cleaning his bast shoe. He went on with his shoe and was threatening the moon: "Light, give me light, clear moon." It was all very strange to the hunter. "Why does this Peasant," he thought, "live by himself? He looks so young, but his hair is quite grey."

He only thought this, but the Peasant guessed his thought and said, "Why am I grey? Because I am the Devil's grandfather."

Then the hunter understood that it was no mere peasant he saw, but the Wood Sprite, and he aimed at him with his gun, *Bang!* and he hit him in the belly. The Wood Sprite groaned, almost fell down from the stump, and that very instant jumped up again and crept into the thicket. After him ran the dog, and after the dog ran the hunter. So he went on and on and on, and he came up to the mountains, and on one of the mountains there was a fissure, and in the fissure stood a little hut.

He entered the hut and looked, and there was the Wood Sprite rolling on a bench, absolutely out of breath, and beside him a maiden who was weeping bitterly. "Who will now give me food and drink?"

"Hail, fair maiden!" said the hunter; "tell me what you are and whence."

"O doughty youth, I do not know myself: I have never seen the free world, and I have never known my father and mother."

"Well, come quickly, I will take you back to Holy Russia." So he took her with him and led her out of the wood, and he went through the villages, inquiring of all of the places. Now, this maiden had been taken away by the Wood Sprite, and had lived with him for three whole years, and she had been enclosed and cut off, and was almost entirely naked, but she had no shame. Then they came to the village, and the huntsman began to ask whether anyone had lost a maiden.

Then the pope said, "This is my daughter." And the pope's wife came: "Oh, my dear daughter, where have you been so long? I never thought I should see you any more."

Then the daughter looked at them, but was simply staggered and understood nothing, and only afterwards, little by little, came to herself. The pope and his wife gave her in marriage to the huntsman and rewarded him with all good things.

Then they went to look for the *izbá*[1] in which she had lived with the Wood Sprite. They wandered far into the woods, but could not find it.

[1] Hut.

THE REALMS OF COPPER, SILVER AND GOLD

Once upon a time there was an old man and his old wife, and they had three sons. One was called Egórushko Zalyót ;[1] the second was called Mísha Kosolápy ;[2] and the third was called Iváshko Zapéchnik.[3] The parents wanted to secure wives for them, and sent the eldest son out to seek a bride. He went for a long time, and saw many maidens, but he took none to wife, for he liked none well enough. On the way he met a three-headed dragon, and was very frightened.

The dragon asked him, "Whither are you going, brave youth ?"

"I am going a-wooing, but I cannot find a bride."

"Come with me ; I will take you where you may find one."

So they journeyed together till they came to a great heavy stone ; and the dragon said to him : "Lift that stone off, then you will find what you are seeking." And Egórushko endeavoured to lift the stone away, but he failed. Then the dragon said : "I have no bride for you here !"

So Egórushko went back home, and he told his father and mother all he had gone through. And the parents reflected for a long time. And they at last sent Mísha Kosolápy on the same journey. He met the dragon after many days, and asked him to show him how he should get a bride. The dragon bade him go with him. And they came to the stone. Mísha tried to lift it away, but

[1] A bold flier. [2] Bandy-legged.
[3] Sitting behind the stove.

in vain; so he returned to his parents and told them all he had gone through.

This time the parents were at an utter loss what they should do. Iváshko Zapéchnik could not have any better luck! But still Iváshko asked his parents' leave to go to the dragon, and after some reluctance he obtained it.

Iváshko met the three-headed dragon, who asked him: "Where are you going, sturdy youth?"

"My brothers set out to marry, but they could find no brides. It is now my turn."

"Come with me; perhaps you may win a bride."

So the dragon and Iváshko went up to the stone, and the dragon commanded him to lift the stone up, and Iváshko thrust the stone, and it flew up from its bed like a feather, as though it were not there, and revealed an aperture in the earth, with a rope ladder.

"Iváshko," said the dragon, "go down that ladder; and I will let you down into the three kingdoms, and in each of them you will see a fair maiden."

So Iváshko went down, deeper and deeper, right down to the realm of copper, where he met a maiden who was very fair.

"God greet you, strange guest! Sit down where you may find room, and say whence you come."

"Oh, fair maiden, you have given me nothing to eat and drink, and you ask me for my news!"

So the maiden gave him all manner of meat and drink and set them on the table.

Iváshko had a drink, and then said: "I am seeking a bride; will you marry me?"

"No, fair youth! go farther on into the silver kingdom. There there is a maiden who is much fairer than I." Thereupon she gave him a silver ring.

So the young boy thanked her for her kindness, said farewell; and he went farther until he reached the silver kingdom. There he saw a maiden who was fairer

yet than the former, and he prayed and bowed down low. "Good day, fair maiden!"

"Good day, strange youth! Sit down and tell me whence you come and what you seek."

"But, fair maiden, you have given me nothing to eat or drink, and you ask my news!"

So the maiden put rich drink and food on the table, and Iváshko ate as much as he would. Then he told her that he was seeking a bride, and he asked her if she would be the bride. "Go yet farther into the golden realm; there there is a maiden who is yet much fairer than I!" the girl said, and she gave him a golden ring.

Iváshko said farewell, and went yet farther, went deeper still, into the golden realm. There he found a maiden who was much, very much fairer than the others, and there he said the right prayer, and he saluted the maiden.

"Whither art thou going, fair youth; and what do you seek?"

"Fair maiden, give me to eat and drink, and I will tell you my news."

So she got him so fine a meal that no better meal on earth could be wished, and she was so fair that no pen could write and no tale could tell.

Iváshko set to valorously, and then he told his tale. "I am seeking a bride; if you will marry me, come with me!"

So the maiden consented, and she gave him a golden ball. Then they went on and on together, until they reached the silver realm, where they took the maiden who was there; and they went on and on and on from there to the copper realm, and took this maiden with them as well. And then they came to the hole through which they were to climb out. The rope ladder stood all ready, and there there stood the elder brothers, who were looking for him. Iváshko tied the maiden out of

the copper realm to the ladder, and the brothers lifted her out, and they let the ladder down again. Then Iváshko laid hold of the maiden from the silver realm, and she was drawn up, and the ladder let down again. This time the maiden from the golden realm came, and was also drawn up. When the steps were let down again, Iváshko sat on them, and the brothers drew it up into the height. But when they saw that this time it was Iváshko Zapéchnik who sat on it, they began to reflect: "If we let him out perhaps he will not give us any of the maidens." So they cut the steps down, and Iváshko fell down. He wept bitterly, but it was no good. He went down farther, and he then came across a tiny old man, who sat on a tree-stem and had a long white beard. Iváshko told him how it had been.

The old man advised him once more to go on. "You will come to a little hut. Enter it and you will see a long man lying in it from one corner to the other. Ask him how you shall reach Russian land once more."

So Iváshko went up to the hut, stepped in and said: "Strong giant,[1] spare me, and tell me how I shall get home again."

"Fi, fo, fum, you Russian bones!" said Ídolishche, "I did not summon you, and still you have come. Go to the thrice-tenth sea, there there stands a hut on cocks' legs in which the Bába Yagá lives. She has an eagle who will carry you."

So the young boy went on and on, a far way, to the hut, and he stepped in.

The Bába Yagá cried out at once, "Fi, fo, fum, Russian bones, why have you come here?"

"Oh, mother, the giant Ídolishche sent me to ask you to lend me your mighty eagle to carry me to Russia."

"Go," said Bába Yagá, "into the garden. At the gate there stands a watchman; take his keys and pass

[1] *Ídolishche*, i.e. Big idol.

through seven doors, and when you open the last the eagle will flap his wings. Sit on his back if you are not afraid, and fly away. But take meat with you and give him to eat whenever he turns round."

Iváshko did as he was bidden, sat on the eagle and flew away. The eagle flew on, flew on; then he soon turned his head round, and Iváshko gave him a bite of flesh. Then the eagle flew on afar, and turned round again, and Iváshko fed him. And he fed him until he had nothing more left, and Russia was still far off. Then the eagle turned round, and as he had no flesh, he tore a fragment out of Iváshko's withers and ate it up. But they had already reached the aperture. When Iváshko parted from the eagle, he spat a bit of flesh out and bade Iváshko lay it on him. And Iváshko did so, and his body healed; and Iváshko went home, took the maiden from the golden realm from his brothers; and they then lived happily, and may still be living if they are not dead.

I was there and I drank beer; I drank the beer, and it flowed up to my whiskers, but none of it reached my mouth.

CHUFÍL-FÍLYUSHKA

ONCE upon a time there were three brothers in a family; the eldest was called the Ram, the second the Goat, and the third and youngest Chufíl-Fílyushka.[1] One day all three went into the forest, where the warder lived who was their réal grandfather. With him Ram and Goat left their own brother Chufíl-Fílyushka, and went out into the forest to hunt. Fílyushka had all his own will and way: his grandfather was old, and a great stupid; and Fílyushka was generous. He wanted to eat an apple. So he eluded his grandfather, got into the garden, and climbed up the apple-tree.

All of a sudden, Heaven knows where from, who should come but the Yagá-Búra,[2] with an iron mortar, and a pestle in her hand; she leaped up to the apple-tree, and said, "How are you, Fílyushka? What have you come here for?"

"Oh, to pluck an apple!" said Fílyushka.

"Well, then, dearie, have a bite of mine!"

"No, it's a rotten one," said Fílyushka.

"Well, here's another one!"

"No, it's all wormy!"

"Don't be saucy; just come up and take one out of my hand."

He stretched out his hand. Then Yagá-Búra gripped it tight, put him into the mortar, and made off, leaping

[1] Θεόφιλος.

[2] An equivalent to the Bába Yagá.

over hills, and forests, and clefts; and swiftly with the pestle driving the mortar.

Then Fílyushka remembered himself, and began to cry out, "Goat, Ram, come along quick. Yagá has carried me away beyond the high, steep hills, the dark, lone woods, the steppes, where the geese roam."

The Ram and the Goat were just then resting. One was lying on the ground, and heard a noise of somebody shouting. So he told the other one: "Come and lie down, and listen!"

"Oh, it's our Fílyushka crying."

Off they went and ran and ran, and ran the Yagá-Búra down, saved Fílyushka and brought him home to his grandfather, who had nearly gone out of his mind with fright! They told him to look after Fílyushka better, and went out again.

But Fílyushka was a real boy, and the first chance he got, off he was again to the apple-tree, clambered up. There was the Yagá-Búra again, and offering him an apple.

"No, you won't catch me this time, you old beast!" said Fílyushka.

"Don't be unkind—do just take an apple from me; I'll throw it to you!"

"Right: throw it down."

Then Yagá threw him down an apple: he stretched out his hand, and she clutched it and leapt over hills, and valleys, and dark forests, so fast that it seemed like a twinkling of an eye, got him into her home, washed him, went out and put him into the bunk.

In the morning she made ready to go out, and ordered her daughter, "Listen! heat the oven well, very hot, and roast me Chufíl-Fílyushka for supper." And she went out to seek further booty.

The daughter went and got the oven thoroughly hot, took out and bound Fílyushka, and put him on the

shovel, and was just going to shove him into the oven, when he went and knocked his forehead with his feet.

"That's not the way, Fílyushka," said the daughter of the Yagá-Búra.

"How then?" he answered. "I don't understand."

"Look here, just let go; I'll show you." She went and lay down on the shovel in the right fashion.

But, although Chufíl-Fílyushka was small, he was no fool! He stuffed her at once into the oven, and shut the oven-door with a bang.

About two or three hours later Fílyushka smelt a smell of good roast meat, opened the door, and took out the daughter of the Yagá-Búra well-cooked; buttered it over, put it into the frying-pan and covered it with a towel, and put it into the bunk; then he climbed up to the roof-tree and took away the business-day pestle and mortar of the Yagá-Búra.

About evening-time, the Yagá-Búra came in, went straight to the bunk and took the roast meat out; ate it all up, collected all the bones, laid them out on the ground in rows, and began to roll on them. But somehow she could not find her daughter, and thought she had gone away to another cottage to weave. But suddenly, whilst she was rolling, she said, "My dear daughter, do come to me and help me roll Fílyushka's little bones!"

Then Fílyushka cried out from the rafters: "Roll away, mother, and stand on your daughter's little bones!"

"Are you there, you brigand! You just wait, and I'll give it you!"

But little Chufíl was not frightened, and when the Yagá-Búra, gnashing her teeth, stamping on the ground, had got up to the ceiling, he just got hold of the pestle and with all his might struck her on the forehead, and down she flopped. Then Fílyushka climbed up on to the roof, and saw some geese flying, and called out to

them, "Lend me your wings; I want wings to carry me home."

They lent him their wings, and he flew home.

But they had long, long ago been praying for the repose of his soul at home, and how glad they were to see him turn up alive and sound! So they changed the requiem for a merry festival, and lived out their lives, and lived on to receive more good yet!

DONOTKNOW

HERE begins the tale of a grey horse, a chestnut horse and of the wise fallow-bay. On the shore of the ocean, in the isle of Buyán, there stood a roasted ox, and behind pounded garlic: on the one side cut your meat, on the other dip deep and eat.

Once upon a time there lived a merchant who had a son, and when the son grew up he was taken into the shop. Now, the first wife of the merchant died, and he married a second.

After some months the merchant made ready to sail to foreign lands, and he loaded his ship with goods and he bade his son look after the house well and attend to business duly.

Then the merchant's son asked, "*Bâtyushka*,[1] when you go, get me my luck!"

"My beloved son," answered the old man, "where shall I find it?"

"It is not far to seek, my luck. When you get up tomorrow morning, stand at the gates and buy the first thing that meets you and give it to me."

"Very well, my son."

So next day the father got up very early, stood outside the gates, and the first thing that met him was a peasant who was selling a sorry, scabby foal—mere dog's meat. So the merchant bargained for it and got it for a silver rouble, took the foal into the courtyard and put it into the stable.

[1] Father.

Then the merchant's son asked him, "Well, *bát-yushka*, what have you found as my luck?"

"I went out to find it, and it turned into a very poor thing."

"Well, so it really had to be: whatever luck the Lord has given us we must use."

Then the father set sail with his goods into foreign lands, and the son sat on the counter and engaged in trade. He grew into the habit, whether he were going into the shop or returning home, always to go and stand in front of his foal.

Now, his stepmother did not love her stepson, and looked out for fortune-tellers to learn how to get rid of him. At last she found an old wise woman, who gave her a poison and bade her put it under the threshold just when her stepson was coming in. As he came back from the shop, the merchant's son went into the stable and saw that his foal was standing in tears, and so he stroked him and asked, "Why, my good horse, do you weep? Why your counsel do you keep?"

Then the foal answered, "Oh, Iván the merchant's son, my beloved master, why should I not weep? Your stepmother is trying to ruin you. You have a dog: when you go home let it go in front of you, and you will see what will come to it."

So the merchant's son listened, and as soon as ever the dog crossed the threshold it was torn into small atoms.

Iván the merchant's son never let his stepmother know that he saw through her spite, and set out next day to the shop, whilst the stepmother went to see the soothsayer. So the old woman got a second poison, and bade her put it into the trough. In the evening, as he went home, the merchant's son went into the stable; and once more the foal was standing on tip-toes and in tears; and he struck him on the haunches and said,

"Why, my good horse, do you weep? Why your counsel do you keep?"

Then the foal answered, "Why should I not weep, my master, Iván the merchant's son? I hear a very great misfortune—that your stepmother wishes to ruin you. Look when you go into the room and sit down at the table: your mother will bring you a draught in the glass. Do you not drink it, but pour it out of the window: you will yourself see what will happen outside."

Iván the merchant's son did as he was bidden and as soon as ever he had thrown the draught out of the window it began to rend the earth; and again he never said a single word to his stepmother; so she still thought that he was in the dark.

On the third day he went to the shop, and the stepmother again went to the soothsayer. The old woman gave her an enchanted shirt. In the evening, as he was going out of the shop, the merchant's son went up to the foal, and he saw that there stood his good horse on tip-toes and in tears. So he struck him by the bridle and said, "Why do you weep, my good horse? Why your counsel do you keep?"

Then the foal answered him, "Why should I not weep? Do I not know that your stepmother is wishing to destroy you? Listen to what I say. When you go home your stepmother will send you to the bath, and she will send the boy to you with a shirt. Do not put on the shirt yourself, but put it on the boy, and you will see yourself what will come of it."

So the merchant's son went up to his attic, and his stepmother came and said to him, "Would you not like to have a steam bath? The bath is now ready."

"Very well," said Iván, and he went into the bath, and very soon after the boy brought him a shirt. As soon as ever the merchant's son put it on the boy he that

very instant closed his eyes and fell on the floor, as though he were dead. And when he took the shirt off him and cast it into the stove, the boy revived, but the stove was split into small pieces.

The stepmother saw that she was doing no good, so she again went to the old soothsayer and asked and besought her how she should destroy her stepson. The old woman answered, "As long as the horse is alive nothing can be brought about. But you pretend to be ill, and when your husband comes back tell him, 'I saw in my sleep that the throat of our foal must be cut and the liver extracted, and I must be rubbed with the liver; then my disease will pass away.'"

Some time after the merchant came back, and the son went out to meet him.

"Hail, my son!" said the father. "Is all well with you at home?"

"All is well, only mother is ill," he answered.

So the merchant unloaded his wares and went home, and he found his wife lying in the bedclothes groaning, saying, "I can only recover if you will fulfil my dream."

So the merchant agreed at once, summoned his son and said, "Now, my son, I want to cut the throat of your horse: your mother is ill, and I must cure her."

So Iván the merchant's son wept bitterly and said, "Oh, father, you wish to take away from me my last luck!" Then he went into the stable.

The foal saw him and said, "My beloved master, I have saved you from three deaths—do you now save me from one. Ask your father that you may go out on my back for the last time to fare in the open fields with your companions."

So the son asked his father for leave to go into the open field for the last time on the horse, and the father agreed. Iván the merchant's son mounted his horse, leapt into the open field, and went and diverted himself

with his friends and companions. Then he sent his father a letter in this wise: "Do you cure my step-mother with a twelve-tongued whip—this is the best means of curing her illness." He sent this letter with one of his good companions, and himself went into foreign lands.

The merchant read the letter, and began curing his wife with a twelve-tongued whip: and she very soon recovered.

The merchant's son went out into the open field, into the wide plains, and he saw horned cattle grazing in front of him.

So the good horse said, "Iván the merchant's son, let me go free at will, and do you pull three little hairs out of my tail: whenever I can be of service to you burn a single hair, and I shall appear at once in front of you, like a leaf in front of the grass. But you, good youth, go to the herd, buy a bull and cut its throat; dress yourself in the bull's hide, put a bladder on your head, and wherever you go, whatever you are asked about, answer only this one word, 'Idonotknow.'"

Iván the merchant's son let his horse go free, dressed himself in the bull's hide, put a bladder on his head, and went beyond the seas. On the blue sea there was a ship a-sailing. The ship's crew saw this marvel—an animal which was not an animal, a man that was not a man, with a bladder on his head and with fur all round him. So they sailed up to the shore in a light boat and began to ask him and to inquire of him. Iván the merchant's son only returned one answer, "Idonotknow."

"If it be so, then your name must be 'Donotknow.'" Then the ship's crew took him, carried him on board the boat, and they sailed to their King.

May-be long, may-be short, they at last reached a capital city, went to the King with gifts, and informed him of Donotknow. So the King bade the portent be

presented before his eyes. So they brought Donotknow into the palace, and the people came up from all parts, seen and unseen, to gaze on him.

Then the King began to ask him, "What sort of a man are you?"

"Idonotknow."

"From what lands have you come?"

"Idonotknow."

"From what race and from what place?"

"Idonotknow."

Then the King put Donotknow into the garden as a scarecrow, to frighten the birds from the apple trees, and he bade him be fed from his royal kitchen.

Now this king had three daughters: the elder ones were beautiful, but the younger fairer still. Very soon the son of the King of the Arabs began asking for the hand of the youngest daughter, and he wrote to the King with threats such as this, "If you do not give her to me of your good will, I will take her by force."

This did not suit the King at all, so he answered the Arab prince in this wise, "Do you begin the war, and it shall go as God shall will."

So the Prince assembled a countless multitude and laid siege.

Donotknow shook off his oxhide, took off his bladder, went into the open fields, burnt one of the hairs, and cried out in a grim voice with a knightly whistle. From some source or other a wondrous horse appeared in front of him, and the steed galloped up, and the earth trembled. "Hail, doughty youth, why do you want me so speedily?"

"Go and prepare for war!"

So Donotknow sat on his good horse, and the horse asked him, "Where shall I carry you—aloft, under the trees, or over the standing woods?"

"Carry me over the standing woods."

So the horse raised himself from the earth and flew over the hostile host. Then Donotknow leapt upon the enemies, seized a warlike sword from one of them, tore a golden helmet from another of them, and put them on himself; covered his face with the visor, and set to slaying the Arab host. Wherever he turned, heads flew: it was like mowing hay. The King and the Princess looked on in amazement from the city wall: "What a mighty hero it must be! Whence has he come? Is it Egóri the Brave who has come to help us?"

But they never imagined that it was Donotknow whom the King had set in the garden as a scarecrow. Donotknow slew many of that host, and even more than he slew his horse trampled down, and he left only the Arab Prince alive and ten men as a suite to see him home. After this great combat he rode back to the town wall and said, "Your kingly Majesty, has my service pleased you?" Then the King thanked him and asked him in as a guest. But Donotknow would not come. He leapt into the open field, sent away his good horse, turned back home, put on the bladder and the bull's hide, and began to walk about in the garden, as before, just like a scarecrow.

Some time went by, not too much, not too little, and the Arab Prince again wrote to the King, "If you do not give me your youngest daughter's hand I will burn up all your kingdom and will take her prisoner."

This also did not please the King, and so he wrote in answer that he would await him with his host. Once again the Arab Prince collected a countless host, larger than before, and he besieged the King from all sides, having three mighty knights standing in front.

Donotknow learned of this, shook off the bull's hide, took off the bladder, summoned his good horse, and leapt to the field. One knight came to meet him. They met in combat, greeted each other and set at each other with

their lances. The knight struck Donotknow so doughtily that he could hardly hold on by one stirrup. Then he got up, flew like a youth, struck off the knight's head, seized him, and threw him over, saying, "This is how all of your heads shall fly." Then another knight came out, and it happened likewise with him; and a third came, and Donotknow fought with him for one whole hour. The knight cut his hand and drew blood, but Donotknow cut off his head and threw it with the rest. Then all of the Arab host trembled and turned back. Just then the King, with the Princesses, was standing on the town wall; and the youngest Princess saw that blood was flowing from the valiant champion's hand, took a kerchief off her neck and bound up the wound herself; and the King summoned him as a guest. "I will come one day," said Donotknow, "but not this time." So he leapt into the open field, dismissed his horse, dressed himself in his oxhide, put the bladder on his head, and began walking up and down the garden like a scarecrow.

Some time went by, not much, not little, and the King gave his two elder daughters away to famous Tsarévichi. He was making ready for a great celebration, and the guests came to walk in the garden; and they saw Donotknow and asked, "What sort of a monster is this?"

So the King said, "This is Donotknow: I am using him as a scarecrow: he keeps the birds off my apple trees."

But the youngest daughter looked at Donotknow's hand and observed her kerchief on it, blushed and never said a word. From that time she began to walk into the garden and to gaze on Donotknow, and became thoughtful, never giving heed to the festivals and to the merriment.

"Where are you always going, my daughter?" asked her father.

"Oh, father, I have lived so many years with you, I have so often walked in the garden, and I have never seen such a delightful bird as I saw there just now!"

Then she began to ask her father to give her his blessing and to wed her to Donotknow. And for all the father might do to convince her, she insisted. "If you will not give me to him, I will remain unmarried all my life and will seek no other man." So the father agreed and he betrothed them.

Soon afterwards the Arab Prince wrote to him for the third time and asked for the hand of his youngest daughter. "If you will not consent, I will consume all of your kingdom with fire, and I will take her by main force."

Then the King answered, "My daughter is already promised: if you wish, come yourself and you will see. So the Prince came, and when he saw what a monster was betrothed to the fair Princess he thought he would slay Donotknow, and he summoned him to mortal combat.

Donotknow shook off his oxhide, took the bladder from his head, summoned his good horse and rode out, so fair a youth as no tale can tell and no pen can write.

They met in the open field, in the wide plains, and the list lasted long. Iván the merchant's son killed the Arab Prince. Then at last the King recognised that Donotknow was not a monster but a splendid and handsome knight, and he made him his heir. Iván the merchant's son lived on in his kingdom for good and lived all for happiness, took his own father to stay with him, but consigned his stepmother to punishment.

THE SEA TSAR AND VASILÍSA THE WISE

ONCE a Tsar lived with his Tsarítsa beyond thrice-nine lands in the thrice-tenth kingdom. He liked to go hunting and shooting the wild beasts. One day the Tsar went out hunting, and saw a young eagle sitting on an oak; and he was just going to shoot him down, when the eagle begged him, "Do not shoot me, Tsar my master, rather take me to yourself; and at some time or other I shall be of service to you." And the Tsar thought and thought, and he said, "How can you be of any service to me?" And again he wanted to shoot him. And the eagle said to him a second time, "Do not shoot, Tsar my master, rather take me to yourself; and some day I shall be of service to you." And the Tsar thought and thought, and again he could not imagine whatever service the eagle would be to him, and he still wanted to shoot him. So for the third time the eagle spoke to him, "Do not shoot me, Tsar my master, rather take me to yourself, and feed me for three years; and at some time I shall be of service to you."

So the Tsar was mollified, and took the eagle to himself, and he fed him one year and another year, and the eagle ate up so much, ate up all the cattle; and the Tsar had neither a sheep nor a cow left.

Then the eagle said to him, "Let me go free." And the eagle tried his wings, but no, he could not fly; and he asked him, "Now, Tsar my master, you have fed me for two years, even as you said; now feed me one year more. Only go on and feed me, and you will not lose."

So the Tsar did this.

"Go and hire cattle and feed me; you will not lose."

So the Tsar did this. From all countries round he went and hired cattle, and every one helped him to feed the eagle. And afterwards he let him go free at his own will.

Then the eagle rose higher and higher, and he flew and flew, and then he came down to earth and said, "Now, Tsar my master, come and sit on me: we will fly together."

So the Tsar sat on the eagle and they flew on and on. Maybe much time went by, maybe little, but they at last flew to the border of the blue sea. Then the eagle shook the Tsar off himself, and he fell into the sea, and he was wetted up to his knees, only the eagle did not let him drown, but supported him on his wing, and asked, "Why, Tsar my lord, why are you frightened?"

"I was frightened," said the Tsar, "lest I should be drowned."

And so once more they flew on, until they came to another sea. And the eagle shook the Tsar off into the middle of the sea, and the Tsar was wetted up to his waist, but the eagle supported him by his wing and asked him, "Why, Tsar my master, why are you frightened?"

"I was frightened," said the Tsar, "and I was thinking, it may be you are never going to drag me out."

And again they flew on, and they arrived at the third sea, and the eagle threw the Tsar into the great depths, and he was immersed in the water up to his very neck. Again, the third time the eagle held him by the wing and asked him, "Why, Tsar my master, why are you frightened?"

"I was," said the Tsar, "I was thinking if only you would rescue me!"

"Now, Tsar my master, you have learned the fear of death. All this shall be for you in the past, and shall be an old tale. You may recollect how I was sitting on the oak and you wished to kill me. Three times you took up your gun to shoot me, but I asked you to spare me; and I was thinking in my mind, may you not destroy me but have pity and take me to yourself!"

So he then flew across thrice-nine lands, for a very long flight. And the eagle said, "Come and see, Tsar my master, what is over us and what is under us."

And the Tsar looked: "Over us," he said, "is the sky, and under us the earth."

"Look once more: what is there on the left and right-hand sides?"

"On the right-hand side there is an open field and on the left-hand side there is a house."

"We will fly there," said the eagle; "there my youngest sister lives."

So they flew straight to the courtyard, and the sister came to meet them and received her brother, seated him on an oaken table; but she would not look on the Tsar—she left him outside in the courtyard and she let the fleet dogs out to feed on him.

But the eagle was very angry, and he leaped up from the table, laid hold on the Tsar and flew, yet farther. So they flew and flew, and the eagle said to the Tsar, "Look, what is there behind us?"

So the Tsar turned round and looked, and said, "Behind us there is a beauteous house."

Then the eagle said to him, "It is the house of my youngest sister that glitters: she would not receive you, but gave you for food to the fleet hounds."

So they flew and flew on, and the eagle asked him again, "Look, Tsar my master, what is there over us, and what under us?"

"Over us the sky and under us the earth."

"Look, what is there on the right-hand, and what is there on the left?"

"On the right-hand side there is the open field, and on the left-hand side there stands a house."

"There my younger sister lives; we will fly there and be her guests."

So they came down to the open courtyard, and the younger sister came and received her brother, and she seated him on an oaken stool, but she left the Tsar in the courtyard, and she released the fleet hounds on him.

And the eagle was angry, leaped up from the table, laid hold on the Tsar and flew with him yet farther; and they flew on and on, and the eagle said to the Tsar, "Look, what is there behind us?"

"Behind us there is a beauteous house."

"It is the house of my younger sister that glitters," said the eagle. "Now we will fly where my mother and eldest sister live."

So they flew thither, and the mother and eldest sister were ever so glad to see them, and they received the Tsar with honour and affection.

"Now, Tsar my master," said the eagle, "come and rest with us, and afterwards I will give you a ship, and I will repay you all I ate up whilst I was with you; and go home with God's aid." So he gave the Tsar a ship and two coffers, one was red and the other green. And he said, "Take heed, do not open the coffers until you reach home: open the red coffer in the back courtyard and the green coffer in the front courtyard."

So the Tsar took the two coffers, bade farewell to the eagle, and went on the blue sea: and he went on and he arrived at an island, where the ship stopped. He got out on the shore, and he remembered the two coffers, and began to wonder what was in them, and why the eagle had bidden him not to open them; and he thought and thought, and his patience gave way. He so badly

wanted to know, and so he took the red coffer, put it on the ground and opened it, and out of it all sorts of cattle came out, so many that the eye could not count, and they almost filled the entire island. When the Tsar saw this he was grieved, and began to weep and say, "Whatever shall I do now? how shall I collect all of this herd into such a tiny coffer?"

And then he saw that out of the water came a man, who went up to him and asked him, "Why are you weeping so bitterly, Tsar my master?"

"Why should I not weep?" answered the Tsar. "How can I put all this great herd into this tiny coffer?"

"If you will I can aid you in your trouble; I will collect all this herd, only on condition that you give me what you do not know of at home."

So the Tsar began to ponder, "What do I not know of at home? It seems to me that I know of everything." So he thought, and he considered it, and he said, "Go and collect them together, and I will give you what I do not know of at home."

Then the man collected all of the cattle into the box, and the Tsar went on board and sailed on his own journey.

When he reached home he saw that a son had been born to him, the Tsarévich, and he began to kiss him and to fondle him. But then he began to weep bitter tears.

"Tsar my master," said the Tsarítsa, "why do you weep such bitter tears?"

"Out of joy," he said; for he feared to tell her the truth that he must give up the Tsarévich.

So then he went into the courtyard and opened the red coffer, and out of it oxen and kine, sheep and rams, came out. There was a multitude of all sorts of cattle. All the barns and the folds were full. He then came to the forecourt and he opened the green coffer, and

in front of him a wonderful garden spread out with every kind of tree in it, and the Tsar was so joyous, and forgot to give his son up.

Many years went by: one day the Tsar wanted to take a walk, and he went to the river; and just then that same man peered up out of the water and said: "You are a very forgetful person, Tsar my master: you should recollect your debts."

Then the Tsar went home with grief in his groaning heart, and he told the Tsarítsa and the Tsarévich all the real truth, and they were afflicted; and they all wept together and resolved that something must be done, and that they must give up the Tsarévich. So they took him to the seashore and left him by himself.

And the Tsarévich looked round, and he saw a path, went on it, trusting God might lead him aright. So he went on and on, and he lost his way in the slumberous forest, and he saw a little *izbá*[1] in the forest, and in the *izbá*[1] there lived the Bába Yagá. "I will go in," thought the Tsarévich, and he went into the *izbá*.[1]

"Good-day, Tsarévich," said Bába Yagá:

> "Is it work on your way,
> Or for sloth do you stray?"

"Hey, *bábushka*, give me food and drink, and ask me afterwards."

So she then gave him food and drink, and the Tsarévich told her all his sorrow without any concealment—whither he was going and why.

Then Bába Yagá said to him, "Go, my child, to the sea; there you will find twelve spoonbills flying in the air, they will turn into fair maidens, who will bathe. You go and hide yourself, and seize the shirt of the eldest maiden. When you have made friends with her, go to the Sea Tsar."

[1] Hut.

The Tsarévich bade farewell to Bába Yagá, went to the spot she named on the seashore, and he hid himself behind the bushes. Then twelve spoonbills flew along, struck the grey earth, and turned into fair maidens, who began bathing. The Tsarévich stole the maiden's shirt, sat behind the bush, and never stirred. The maidens came out of the sea and went on shore: eleven of them struck the earth, turned into birds and flew home: one was left alone, the eldest—Vasilísa the Wise. And when she saw that her sisters flew away she said, "Do not seek me, my dear sisters, but fly home. I am myself to blame; it is all my own fault; I did not look, and I must pay the cost." So the sisters, the fair maidens, struck the grey earth and turned into spoonbills, spread their wings, and flew far away. Vasilísa the Wise was left by herself, and she looked round and said: "Whoever he be who now has my shirt, let him come here: if he be an old man, he shall be as my own father; if he be a middle-aged man, he shall be as my beloved brother; if he be of my age, he shall be my lover."

As soon as he heard this, Iván Tsarévich came out of his lurking-place. So she gave him a golden ring and said, "Iván Tsarévich, how long you have been in coming! The Sea Tsar is wroth with you. That is the road which leads to the kingdom under the sea; come on it boldly. There you will find me as well, for I am Vasilísa the Wise, the daughter of the Sea Tsar." Then Vasilísa the Wise, the eldest, struck the earth, turned into a spoonbill, and flew away from the Tsarévich.

Then Iván went into the under-seas, and he saw light there as it is above, fields and meadows and green arbours; and the sun was hot. Then he came to the Sea Tsar, and the Sea Tsar shrieked out at him: "Why have you been so long? You have been guilty, and you must do me this service: I have a piece of waste ground thirty

versts long and broad, and there is nothing on it except ditches, ravines and sharp stones. By to-morrow morning all this must be as smooth as the palm of my hand; rye must be sown and grow so high that a jackdaw might be hidden in it. But if you fail, your head shall roll off your shoulders."

Iván Tsarévich left the Sea Tsar and wept a sea of tears. Out of the window of her room, from a lofty turret, Vasilísa the Wise saw him and asked, "Hail, Iván Tsarévich! why are you weeping?"

"How should I not weep?" answered Iván. "The Sea Tsar has bidden me in a single night level the ravines and clear the stones from a piece of land thirty versts long and broad, and grow rye on it so high that a jackdaw might hide in it."

"That is easy enough: this is no trouble—trouble is still ahead. Come and lie down in peace; the morning is wiser than the evening. All shall be ready."

So Iván Tsarévich went and lay down, and Vasilísa the Wise went to a little window and cried in a thunderous voice, "Hail, my faithful servants, go and level the deep ravines, take away the sharp stones, sow the ground with full-eared rye, so that in the morning it shall grow so high that a jackdaw might hide in it."

In the morning Iván Tsarévich awoke, and when he looked out it was all done: there were no ravines and no crevasses, and the field was as flat as the palm of his hand, and the rye on it was red and so lofty that a jackdaw might hide in it. And he went to report his prowess to the Sea Tsar.

"Thank you," said the Sea Tsar. "You have been able to fulfil me this service. Here is your second work. I have thirty hayricks, and each hayrick contains as much as thirty piles of white-eared barley. Thresh me all the barley clean, quite clean to the last grain, and do not destroy the hayricks nor beat down the sheaves.

If you do not do this, your shoulders and your head will part company."

"I will obey your Majesty," said Iván Tsarévich, and again he went to the courtyard and was lost in tears.

"Why are you weeping, Iván Tsarévich, so bitterly?" Vasilísa the Wise asked him.

"Why should I not weep? The Sea Tsar has bidden me thresh clean thirty hayricks of barley without destroying a hayrick or a single sheaf, and all in a single night."

"That is an easy task. Harder tasks are to come. Sleep in peace, for the morning is wiser than the evening."

So Iván Tsarévich went and lay down.

Vasilísa went to her window and cried out in a threatening voice, "Hail, ye creeping ants, as many as there be of you in the white world, all creep here and pick out all the corn of my father's hayricks quite cleanly."

In the morning the Sea Tsar asked Iván Tsarévich if he had done this service.

"I have, your Majesty."

"Let us go and see."

So they went to the barn floor, and there all the hayricks stood untouched; and they went to the granary, and all the lofts were filled to the top with corn.

"Thank you, brother," said the Sea Tsar. "Now you must make me a church out of white wax, to be ready to-night, and this shall be your last task."

Once again Iván Tsarévich went to the courtyard and began to weep.

"Why are you weeping, Iván Tsarévich?"

"Why should I not weep? The Sea Tsar has bidden me in a single night build a church of white wax."

"That is an easy task: harder tasks are near at hand. Lie down in peace, for the morning is wiser than the evening."

So Iván Tsarévich went to sleep.

Then she went to her window and called to her all the bees in the white world, "Hail, ye bees my servants, do ye build me a church of your white wax, and let it be finished before the morning."

In the morning Iván got up, looked, and saw the church stood there made of clean wax, and he went to the Sea Tsar and reported.

"Thank you, Iván Tsarévich: of all the servants I have had, none of them have been able to do as well as you. Now be my heir and the preserver of my kingdom. Now select yourself a bride out of my twelve daughters. They are all alike, face for face, hair with hair, clothing with clothing. If you guess three times the same one, she shall be your bride; if you do not, you shall suffer."

Vasilísa the Wise learned of this, chose her opportunity, and said to the Tsarévich, "The first time I will wave my dress, the second time I will smooth my dress, and the third time there shall be a fly buzzing round my head." Thus he was able to guess Vasilísa all three times. And they were betrothed, and there was a merry feast for three days.

Time went by, may-be little, may-be much. Iván Tsarévich grew anxious to see his father and mother, and he wished to go back to Holy Russia.

"Why are you so grieved, Iván Tsarévich?"

"O Vasilísa the Wise, I am afflicted for my father and my mother, and desire to behold Holy Russia."

"If we go away there will be a mighty chase after us. The Sea Tsar will be wroth, and will give us over to death. We must be cunning." So Vasilísa spat in three corners, and the doors of her room opened, and she, with Iván Tsarévich, ran into Sacred Russia. On the second day, very early, an embassy came from the Sea Tsar to catch the young couple and to summon them into the palace, and they knocked on the door: "Wake up, get up from your sleep; your father is calling you."

"It is yet early: we have not yet had our sleep; come later on," one pool answered.

Then the ambassadors retired, and they waited one hour and another hour, and they knocked again: "This is not the time and season to sleep; this is the time and season to get up."

"Have a little patience, we will get up; we are dressing," the second pool answered.

And the third time the envoys came, saying that the Sea Tsar was angry: "Why are you so long making ready?"

"We will be down soon," answered the third pool.

So the messengers waited and waited, and then again knocked. Then there was no answer and no reply, so they broke in the door, and all was empty. Then they went and sent word to the Sea Tsar that the young folk had run away. He was very angry, and he set a mighty hunt after them.

But Vasilísa the Wise, with Iván Tsarévich, was already very far ahead: they were leaping on swift horses without staying, without taking breath. "Now, Iván Tsarévich, bend your head down to the grey earth and listen. Is there no noise of a hunt from the Sea Tsar?"

Iván Tsarévich leapt down from his horse, put his ear to the ground, and said, "I hear the talk of people, and the tramp of horses."

"This is the hunt after us," said Vasilísa the Wise. And she at once turned the horses into a green meadow, Iván Tsarévich into an old shepherd, and herself into a brooding lamb.

The hunt passed by.

"Ho, old man, have you seen a doughty youth with a fair maiden galloping by?"

"No, good folk, I have not seen them," said Iván Tsarévich. "It is forty years I have been pasturing

on these fields; not one bird has ever flown by, not one wild beast has ever rambled by."

So they returned home.

"Your Imperial Majesty, we saw no one on the road; we only saw a shepherd feeding a little sheep."

"Why did you not take it? That was themselves!" said the Sea Tsar. And he sent out a second hunt.

But Iván Tsarévich and Vasilísa the Wise were leaping far off on their swift steeds. "Now, Iván Tsarévich, put your head to the grey earth and listen whether there is no hunt from the Sea Tsar."

Iván Tsarévich leapt off his horse, put his ear to the grey earth and said, "I hear the talk of people and the hoppety-hop of horses."

"This is the chase, that is the steeds," said Vasilísa the Wise; and she turned herself into a church, and Iván Tsarévich into an elderly pope and the horses into trees.

So the hunt went by.

"Ho, *bátyushka*, have you seen a shepherd with a little lamb passing by?"

"No, good people, I have not. I have been working for forty years in this church; not one bird has flown by, not one beast has rambled by."

So the hunt went back and reached home.

"Your Imperial Majesty, we could not find the shepherd with the little lamb: the only thing we saw on the road was a church and an old man as pope."

"Why did you not break down the church and capture the pope? That was themselves!" the Sea Tsar exclaimed, and he himself leapt out to hunt after Iván Tsarévich and Vasilísa the Wise.

So they went far, and again Vasilísa the Wise said, "Iván Tsarévich, put your ear to the ground; can you hear any hunt?"

Then the Tsarévich leapt down, put his ear to the

grey earth, and said, "I hear the talk of people and the thunder of horses' hooves faster than before."

"This is the Sea Tsar himself who is galloping."

So Vasilísa the Wise turned the horses into a mere, Iván Tsarévich into a drake, and herself into a duck. The Sea Tsar came up to the lake and he instantly guessed who were the duck and the drake, so he struck the grey earth and turned into an eagle. The eagle wanted to smite them to death, and it might well have been; but, as soon as ever he struck at the drake, it dived into the water, and whenever he struck at the duck the duck dived into the water, and whatever he might do was all in vain.

So the Sea Tsar galloped back to his own kingdom under the seas, and Vasilísa the Wise with Iván Tsarévich waited a while and then returned to Sacred Russia. It may-be long, it may-be short, at last they came into the thrice-ninth realm. When they arrived home his father and mother were overjoyed to see Iván Tsarévich, for they had given him up as lost. And they made a great feast and celebrated the marriage.

I was there, I drank mead and wine: it flowed up to my beard, but it never entered my mouth.

THE ANIMALS' WINTER QUARTERS

ONCE an Ox was wandering in the wood, and a Ram met him. "Where are you going, Ram?" asked the Ox.

"I am seeking summer in winter," answered the Ram.

"Come with me."

So they went together. And they met a Pig.

"Where are you going, Pig?" asked the Ox.

"I am seeking summer in winter."

"Come with us."

So they all went together. And they then met a Goose.

"Where are you going, Goose?" said the Bull.

"I am seeking summer in winter," said the Goose.

"Well, come with us."

So the Goose came with them. So they went on, and they met a Cock.

"Where are you going, Cock?" asked the Bull.

"I am seeking summer in winter."

"Then come with us," said the Bull again.

So they went on their road and way, and began speaking amongst each other. "What shall we do, brothers and comrades? the cold time is approaching: how shall we have warmth?"

So the Ox said, "We will build an *izbá*,[1] and we shall not freeze during the winter."

Then the Ram said: "My *shúba* is very warm; I will pass the winter in this fashion."

Then the Pig said, "I do not mind any frost whatso-

[1] Hut.

ever: I will burrow into the ground and do without any *izbá*."[1]

Then the Goose said, "I will sit in the middle of this spruce, lie on one wing, and cover myself over with the other, and the cold cannot touch me. That is how I shall pass the winter."

Then the Cock said, "I shall do the same."

Then the Ox saw he could not do any good: every man must do as he likes. "Well," he said, "as you wish. *I* am going to build an *izbá*."[1]

So he built himself an *izbá*,[1] and he lived in it.

Then the cold time came, and earth began to feel the frosts. And the Ram, who could not help himself, came to the Bull and said, "Brother, let me in."

"No, Ram, you have a warm *shúba*; that is how you are going to pass the winter! I shall not let you in."

"But if you do not let me in, I shall run up and will dislodge the joists of the *izbá*,[1] and you will feel much colder."

So the Bull thought, and on second thoughts said, "Very well, I will let you in. Otherwise I might freeze." And he let the Ram in.

Soon the Pig felt frozen, and came to the Bull and said, "Brother, let me in."

"No, Pig, I will not let you in. You need only burrow down in the ground: that is how you are going to pass the winter!"

"But if you will not let me in, with my snout I will drill all of your uprights and will knock your *izbá*[1] down."

Well, there was no help for it, and the Bull had to let Piggy in.

Then the Goose and the Cock came to the Bull and said, "Brother, we want to come in and warm ourselves."

"No, I will not let you in: both of you have two

[1] Hut.

wings. One of them you put under you, and the other you put over you: that is how you pass the winter."

"But if you do not let us in," said the Goose, "I will pluck away all the moss from the walls, and you will be much colder!"

"What! won't you let me in?" said the Cock. "I will fly on to the garret and I will scatter all the earth from the roof, and you will be much colder."

Well, the Bull was beaten, and he was forced to admit the Goose and the Cock. In the warm hut the Cock crowed and began singing merry songs.

Now the Fox heard the Cock singing merry songs, and thought he would like to make such a dainty acquaintance, only he did not know how to.

So the Fox bethought himself of his wiles, and ran up to the Bear and the Wolf and said, "Now, my dear kinsmen, I have found food for all of us: a Bull for you, Mr. Bear, a Ram for you, Mr. Wolf, and a Cock for myself."

"What a capital fellow you are, Mr. Fox!" said the Bear and the Wolf. "We shall never be oblivious of your services: let us kill and eat them."

So the Fox led them up to the little *izbá*.[1] When they reached the hut, the Bear said to the Wolf: "You go first."

But the Wolf said, "That would be altogether wrong—you must go first."

So then the Bear and the Wolf said to the Fox, "You must go first."

As the Fox went in, the Bull gored him with his horns to the wall, and the Ram sat on his flanks, and the Pig tore him to atoms, whilst the Goose flew on to him and picked out his eyes. But the Cock went and flew up to the girder and crowed, "Do come in, oh do, do, do!"

"Why is the Fox such a long time at work with the

[1] Hut.

Cock ? " said the Wolf: " Unlock the door, Mikháylo Ivánovich,[1] and I will come in."

" Very well, come in ! " So the Bull opened the door and the Wolf leapt into the *izbá*.[2]

As the Wolf went in the Bull gored him to the wall with his horns, the Ram sat on his sides and the Pig tore him to atoms, while the Goose flew on to him and picked out his eyes. The Cock flew up to the girders and began shouting, " Come along here, come along here ! "

But the Bear got tired of waiting so long: " What a long job he is making of that Ram ! " he thought. " I must go in." So he also went into the hut, and the Bull gave him the same royal welcome.

He burst out by sheer force and galloped away at full speed, and never once looked round.

[1] A mock patronymic for the Bull.
[2] Hut.

THE STORY OF THE BRAVE AND DOUGHTY KNIGHT ILYÁ MÚROMETS AND THE NIGHTINGALE ROBBER

ONCE in the famous city of Múrom[1] in the village of Karachárovo, a peasant lived who was called Iván Timoféyevich; he had one beloved son, Ilyá Múromets. And he sat down in a house as a stay-at-home for thirty years, and after the thirty years had gone by he began to walk on his feet mightily, and he gained great strength. Then he made himself the trappings of war and a lance of steel, and got himself a good steed, a knightly horse; he then went up to his mother and father and asked their blessing. "Ye, my masters, my mother and father, let me go into the famous city of Kíev, to pray to God and to do homage to our prince at Kiév."

The mother and father gave him their blessing, and made him swear a mighty oath, and they enjoined a mighty service upon him. And they spake in this wise: "Do you go straight to the city of Kíev, straight to the city of Chernígov, and on your journeying do no one any hurt, spill no Christian blood vainly."

Ilyá Múromets took the blessing of his father and mother, prayed to God, bade farewell to his father and mother, and set forth on his way and road. And he journeyed far in the dark woods, and lighted on a camp of robbers. Those robbers saw Ilyá Múromets, and were envious in their robber-like hearts for his knightly horse, and began to speak amongst themselves how they might take that horse; for steeds so fine were not seen in those parts, and now some unknown man was passing by on

[1] *v.* note to p. 125.

one. So they set on Ilyá Múromets, ten at once and then by twenties. And Ilyá Múromets stopped his knightly horse, took a tempered dart and set it on his strong bow. He let the tempered dart fall on the earth, and it tore into the earth fifty feet.

And seeing this, the robbers were afraid, and collected in a circle, fell on their knees and prayed him, "Master, our father, youth mighty of prowess, we are guilty in thine eyes; and, for this our guilt, as it pleaseth thee, inflict on us a fine as much as is fit, whether it be coloured clothes or droves of horses."

Ilyá smiled at them and said: "I need no garments, but, if ye wish to enjoy your life, henceforth take no more hazards."

And he went on his road to the famous city of Kíev. And Ilyá Múromets set out on the road; when he came under the walls of the city of Sébezh he saw three Tsarévichi from foreign parts, who had a host of thirty thousand men; they wished to capture the city of Sébezh and to take the Tsar of Sébezh prisoner. So Ilyá Múromets set out after the three Tsarévichi, and he pursued them down to the seashore and slew all the rest of the army, but captured the Tsarévichi alive and returned to the city of Sébezh, and the citizens saw him and gave news of this to their Tsar.

When he arrived at the city of Chernígov, under the walls of the city of Chernígov there was a Saracen host too many to count besieging the city of Chernígov: they were going to sack it and to set God's churches aflame, and to take captive the Prince, the Duke of Chernígov. And at that mighty host and fray, Ilyá Múromets was afraid, but he placed himself at the will of the Saviour, and thought how he would sacrifice his head for the Christian faith. Then Ilyá Múromets began to lay low the Saracen host with his lance of steel, and he routed all of the pagan host and took the Tsarévich

of the Saracens captive and led him into the city of Chernígov. As he entered, all the citizens of the city of Chernígov met him and gave him honour, and the Prince and Duke of Chernígov himself came out to receive the doughty youth with honour and to give thanks to the Lord God for sending such unexpected succour to the city and not letting them all perish helplessly before the mighty Saracen host. They received him into their palace and they gave him a great feast, and set him on his way.

Ilyá Múromets went to the city of Kíev straight from Chernígov on the road by the village of Kutúzovo, which the Nightingale Robber had been oppressing for thirty years, not letting any man pass, whether on horseback or on foot, and assailing them not with any weapon, but only with his robber's whistle. Ilyá Múromets rode into the open field and saw the scattered bones of knights and warriors. He rode over them and arrived at the Bryánski woods,[1] the miry swamp, to the hazel-tree bridges, and to the Smoródina river. The Nightingale Robber heard his end approaching, and felt a foreboding of a terrible ill; and before Ilyá Múromets had advanced twenty versts, he whistled with his powerful robber's whistle. But the valorous heart of Ilyá was not afraid, and before ever he had advanced ten versts more the Nightingale Robber whistled more terribly than before, and the horse of Ilyá Múromets stumbled at the sound.

At last Ilyá arrived at the nest, which was spread above twelve oaks, and the Nightingale Robber was sitting in the nest, saw the white Russian knight approaching, and began to whistle with all of his might, essaying to smite Ilyá Múromets to death. Ilyá Múromets took out his strong bow, put a tempered dart to it, and shot it at the

[1] A great forest in Central Russia, once impenetrable and always legendary.

nest of the Nightingale Robber; it fell into his right eye and went beyond. And the Robber-Nightingale fell down from his nest like a sheaf of oats. Ilyá Múromets took the Robber-Nightingale, tied him strongly to his steel stirrup and rode to the famous city of Kíev.

On his way he passed the palace of the Nightingale Robber, and as soon as he came up to the Robber's palace the windows were opened and out of these windows the Nightingale Robber's three daughters were looking. The youngest daughter saw him, and cried out to her sisters: "Here is our father coming back with booty: he is bringing us a man tied to his steel stirrup."

But the elder sister looked out and cried bitterly: "That is not our father; some unknown man is coming along and is dragging our father after him."

Then they cried out to their husbands, "Masters, do ye go and meet that man and slay him for the slaying of our father, lest our name be disgraced."

Then their husbands, mighty warriors, set out to face the white Russian knight. They had good horses, sharp lances, and they wished to hoist Ilyá aloft on their lances.

The Nightingale Robber saw them, and said, "My beloved sons, do not dishonour nor take such a bold knight, and so all receive your death from him; it would be better to ask his forgiveness in humbleness and to ask him into my house to have a goblet of green wine."

So at the invitation of the sons-in-law Ilyá returned home and received no evil of them.

The eldest daughter raised an iron storm-board of chains for him to stumble against; but Ilyá saw her on the gates, struck at her with his lance, and he smote her to death.

When Ilyá arrived at the city of Kíev, he went straight

to the Prince's courtyard, entered the white stone palace, prayed to God and did homage to the Prince.

The Prince of Kíev asked him, "Say, doughty youth, how do they call thee? Of what city art thou?"

And Ilyá Múromets returned answer: "My lord, they call me Ílyushka, and by my father's name Ivánov; I live in the city of Múrom in the village of Karachárovo."

Then the Prince asked him, "By what road didst thou come?"

"From Múrom by the city of Chernígov, and under the walls of Chernígov I routed a Saracen host too many to count, and I relieved the city of Chernígov. And from there I went straight and I took the mighty Nightingale Robber alive and dragged him along at my steel stirrup."

Then the Prince was angry and said, "Why art thou telling such tales?"

When the knights Alyósha Popóvich and Dobrýnya Nikítich heard this, they dashed out to look, and assured the Prince that this was really so.

Then the Prince bade a goblet of green wine be given to the doughty youth. The Prince, however, wished to hear the whistle of the Robber-Nightingale. Ilyá Múromets put the Prince and Princess into a sable *shúba*, seized them under the arm, called in the Nightingale Robber and bade him whistle like a nightingale with only half his whistle; but the Nightingale Robber whistled with all his robber's whistle, and he deafened all of the knights, so that they fell to the ground, and as a punishment for this was slain by Ilyá Múromets.

Ilyá Múromets swore blood brotherhood with Dobrýnya Nikítich, then they saddled their good horses and rode forth on the open fields; and they journeyed on for about three months and found no opponent worthy of their steel: they had only gone in the open field.

Then they met a passer-by, a beggar singing psalms. His shirt weighed fifteen *pud*, and his hat ten *pud*, and his stick was ten *sazhéns* long. Ilyá Múromets set on him with his horse, and was going to try his mighty strength on him.

Then the passing beggar saw Ilyá Múromets and said: "Hail, Ilyá Múromets! Do you recollect? I learned my letters with you in the same school, and now you are setting your horse on me, who am only a beggar, as though I were an enemy, and you do not know that a very great misfortune has befallen the city of Kíev. The infidel knight, the mighty man, the dishonourable Ídolishche, has arrived. His head is as big as a beer cauldron, and his shoulders a *sazhén* broad. There is a span length between his brows, and between his ears there is a tempered dart. And he eats an ox at a time and he drinks a cask at a time. The Prince of Kíev is very aggrieved with you that you have left him in such straits."

So Ilyá Múromets changed into the beggar's dress and rode straight back to the palace of the Prince, and cried out in a knightly voice: "Hail to thee, Prince of Kíev! give me, a wandering beggar, alms."

And the Prince saw him and spoke in this wise: "Come into my palace, beggar. I will give you food and drink and will give you gold on your way."

So the beggar went into the palace and stood at the stove and looked round.

Ídolishche asked to eat, so they brought him an entire roasted ox and he ate it to the bones; then Ídolishche asked for drink, so they brought him a cauldron of beer; and twenty men had to bring it in. And he held it up to his ears and drank it all through.

Ilyá Múromets said, "My father had a gluttonous mare; it guzzled until its breath failed."

Ídolishche could not stand this affront, and said, "Hail,

wandering beggar! Do you dare me? I could take you in my hands; if it had been Ilyá Múromets I would even have braved him."

"Well," said Ilyá Múromets, "that is the kind of man he was!" And he took off his cap and struck him lightly on the head, and he nearly knocked through the walls of the palace, took Ídolishche's trunk and flung it out. And in return the Prince honoured Ilyá Múromets, praised him highly, and placed him amongst the mighty knights of his court.

NIKÍTA THE TANNER

One day, somewhere near Kíev, a dragon appeared, who demanded heavy tribute from the people. He demanded every time to eat a fair maiden: and at last the turn came to the Tsarévna, the princess. But the dragon would not eat her, she was too beautiful. He dragged her into his den and made her his wife. When he flew out on business, he used to pile logs of wood in front of the den to prevent the Tsarévna escaping. But the Tsarévna had a little dog that had followed her all the way from home. When she wrote a letter to her father and mother she used to tie it to the neck of her little dog, which would run all the way home and bring an answer back. One day her parents wrote to her: "Try to discover any one who is stronger than the dragon." The Tsarévna got every day on more intimate terms with her dragon in order to discover who was stronger. At last he owned that Nikíta, the tanner at Kíev, was the stronger. So the Tsarévna at once wrote to her father: "Look for Nikíta, the tanner at Kíev, and send him on to me to deliver me from my imprisonment."

So the Tsar looked for Nikíta, and went to him himself to beg him to release the land from the cruelty of the dragon and redeem the princess.

Just then Nikíta was tanning skins. He was just enfolding twelve hides in his hands. But when he saw the Tsar come to see him, his hands so trembled for fear that he rent the twelve hides. But, however much the Tsar and the Tsarítsa asked him, he would not set out against the dragon. Then the Tsar assembled five

thousand children, who were to mollify the tanner with their bitter tears. The little ones came to Nikíta and begged him to go and fight the dragon. And when he saw them weep, Nikíta the tanner himself almost felt the tears flowing. He took thirty *puds* of hemp, tarred it, and swathed himself in it in order that the dragon might find him a hard morsel, and then set out. But the dragon locked himself up in his den and would not come to view.

"Come with me into the open field, otherwise I will shatter your den to pieces!" said the tanner, and began clattering at the doors.

Then the dragon, seeing his doom approach, came out into the open. Nikíta the tanner fought the grisly worm some time, maybe long, maybe short, and at last got him under.

Then the dragon besought Nikíta the tanner: "Do not beat me to death. Stronger than us two there is nothing in the white world. Let us divide the earth. You may live on the one half and I on the other."

"Very well!" said Nikíta, "only we must delimit frontiers."

So the tanner took the plough, which weighed three hundred *puds*, and harnessed to it the dragon, and drew the harrow all the way from Kíev to the Caspian Sea.

"Now we have divided the entire earth," said the dragon.

"Yes, we have divided the earth, but not the sea; we must also divide the sea, otherwise you would say I was taking your share of the water." So they then set out into the middle of the sea, and there Nikíta slew the dragon and drowned him.

The trench may still be seen: it is two fathoms deep. They plough all round it; but never touch the bottom: those who do not know whence came this trench call it a battlement.

When Nikíta had done this feat, he demanded no reward for it, but went home and went on tanning.

THE SINGING-TREE AND THE SPEAKING-BIRD

ONCE upon a time there was a very inquisitive King who spent all his time eavesdropping at the window. There was also a merchant, who had three daughters, and one day they were talking to their father, and one said: "If only the King's bread-bearer would marry me!" The second one said: "If only the King's valet would cast his eyes upon me!" But the third said: "I want the King himself: I would bear him two sons and one daughter."

Now the King was listening to all this conversation; and after a few days he did exactly as they had wished: the eldest married the King's bread-bearer, the middle one the King's valet, but the youngest married the King himself.

The King married very happily, and after some time his Queen was about to bear him a child. He was sending for the midwife of the town, but the elder sisters asked him why he should; they would act as midwives. As soon as the Queen had born him a son, the midwives took him away and told the King his wife had born a pup; and they put the new-born babe into a box and threw it into a big pond in the King's garden.

At this the King was very angry, and wanted to have his wife blown to bits at the cannon's mouth; but—it so happened—some other princes were on a visit, and persuaded him to forgive a first offence. So the King pardoned her for the nonce, and gave her a second chance.

One year went by, and the Queen bore him another

son, and the sisters again took it away, and told him she had born a kitten. The King was angry at first, this time he was sore enraged, and was agog to punish his wife, but once more he was won over.

So he gave her a third chance. This time the Queen bore a very beautiful daughter, and the sisters took it and told the King she had born an unheard-of monster. Oh! there were no bounds to his fury now; he ordered the hangman in and bade him hang his wife on the spot; but once more some visiting princes overruled him and said: "Would it not be better to put an oratory up near the church and put her into it, and let every one who goes to Mass spit into her eyes?" So he did; but, so far from being spat upon by every passer-by, every one brought her fine loaves and pasties.

But, when her three children had been thrown into the pond in the King's garden, they were not drowned, for the King's gardener took them home and brought them up. They were fine children; you could *see* them growing up, not by years, but months, not by days, but by hours. The King's sons shot up, youths no men could imagine, guess, or draw, or paint; and the Tsarévna was such a beauty! Almost terribly beautiful! One day, when they were older, they asked the gardener to let them build themselves a little home behind the town. The gardener consented, and they erected a big, splendid house, and led a merry life in it. The brothers used to go hunting hares, and one day they went off and left their sister alone at home.

A visitor knocked at the door: the sister opened the door and saw an old hag, who said: "You have a pretty little place here; three things are lacking."

"What are they? I always thought we had everything!"

The hag replied: "You still need the Talking-Bird, the Singing-Tree, and the Water of Life."

And then the sister was left all alone once more; when her brothers came home, she said: "Brothers, we lack nothing save three things."

"What are they?"

"We haven't a Talking-Bird, a Singing-Tree, and the Water of Life!"

The elder brother said: "Sister, give me your blessing, and I'll go and discover you these marvels. If I die, or am killed, you will know by this knife dripping blood. There it is, stuck into the wall."

So he went, and wandered away, far, far away into the forest. At last he came to a gigantic oak-tree; and on the tree there was an old man sitting, whom he asked how he was to procure the "Talking-Bird, a Singing-Tree, and the Water of Life."

The old man replied: "Possible it is, but not easy; many go, but few return."

But the young man persisted and left the old man. The old man gave him a rolling-pin, and told him to let it roll on in front of him, and follow wherever it went. The pin rolled on, and after it walked the Prince: it rolled up to a steep hill, and was lost. Then the Prince went up the hill, went half-way up; and, as he went along, he heard a voice: "Hold him, seize him, grip him!" He looked round and was turned into stone.

That very same hour blood began to drip from the knife in the cottage, and the sister told the younger brother that the elder was dead.

So he answered: "Now I will go, sister mine, and capture the Talking-Bird, the Singing-Tree, and the Water of Life!"

So she blessed him, and he went on and on for very many weary miles, and met the old man on the tree, who gave him another rolling-pin: and the pin rolled up to the mountain; and both were lost, pin and Prince!

The sister waited for many years, but he never came

back, and she thought he, too, must have died. So she set out to find the Talking-Bird, Singing-Tree, and Water of Life. She arrived at last at that same oak-tree, saw the old man sitting on it, greeted him, and shaved his head and brows, as she brought scissors and a mirror with her.

"Look," she said, "what a change it makes in you!"

He looked into the mirror: "Yes," he said; "I am quite a fine man now. I've sat here thirty years: never a soul cut my hair, you guessed my need."

Then she asked him: "Grandfather, how can I get the Talking-Bird, the Singing-Tree, and the Water of Life?"

He answered: "How can you get them? Cleverer folk than you have been after them, and they have all been lost."

But she persisted: "Please tell me!"

So he gave her another rolling-pin, and told her to follow it: she would hear cries of "Catch her: scotch her," but she must not look round, for fear of being turned into stone. "At the top you will see a well and the Talking-Bird. As you come back, you will see lofty stones standing upright; sprinkle them all with the Water of Life."

So on she went: the pin rolled on, far or near, long or short, it reached a steep mountain; and the girl climbed up and heard cries: "Where are you going? We shall kill you! We shall eat you up!"

But still she went on and on, reached the summit, and there she found a well and the Talking-Bird. She took it and asked it: "Tell me how to get the Singing-Tree and the Water of Life."

The Bird replied: "Go straight by this path."

She did, and came upon the Singing-Tree, and in it all sorts of birds were singing. She broke off a sprig, pulled up a water-lily, and put some of the Water of Life into the cup of the flower, and turned back homewards.

As she clomb downhill, she saw boulders standing upright, and sprinkled them with the Water of Life; and her brothers jumped up alive and said: "Oh, what a long sleep we have had!"

"Yes, my brothers, but for me you would have slept on for ever. And look here; I have got you the Talking-Bird, the Singing-Tree, and the Water of Life!"

The brothers were overjoyed, went home and planted the Singing-Tree in the garden; it overspread the whole garden, and all kinds of birds began singing.

One day they were out hunting and the King met them by chance. He fell in love with the gay huntsmen, and invited them home. They said they would ask their sister, and come at once if she consented.

So they went back home. The sister met them and greeted them, and the brothers said: "Please, sister, may we go and dine with the King? He has asked us in."

She said "Yes," and they went. At the banquet, the King gave them the place of honour, and they begged he would honour them with a visit. Some days later the King went. They gave him a rich spread, and showed him the Singing-Tree and the Talking-Bird.

He was amazed and said: "I am the King, and have nothing as good!"

Then the King looked at them and said: "Who is your father?"

They said: "We do not know." But the Talking-Bird broke in and said: "They are your children."

Then the King looked at the maiden and wanted to marry her. Again the Talking-Bird said: "You may not; she is your daughter."

The King then saw how matters stood; was overjoyed; took them to live with him for ever. As to the two evil sisters, he had them shot; but his wife he released from the chapel, and took her to himself again, and they lived merrily on for many years of happiness.

AT THE BEHEST OF THE PIKE

ONCE there lived a poor peasant; and, however much he might toil and moil, he got nothing out of it. "Oh," he thought to himself, "mine is a sorry lot; I spend all my days on my fields; and then, when I look, I am starving, whilst my neighbour is lying all day long on his back, and then he has a big estate and all the profits swim into his pockets. Evidently I have not pleased God. I will get up in the morning and pray until evening, and perhaps the Lord may have mercy on me."

So he began to pray to God, and went hungry for days on days; and he still went on praying.

At last Easter Day came, and the bells rang for Mass. So the poor peasant thought, "All good folks are getting ready to break the fast, and I have not a crust of bread. Well, if I bring water, I can sip it like soup." So he took a small can, went to the well, and as soon as he dipped it into the water a big pike fell into it. Then the peasant was very glad. "Here is something for supper; I will cook it and make fish soup of it, and shall have a fine supper."

Then the pike said to him in a human voice: "Let me go free, good man, go free. I will make you happy; whatever your soul may desire you shall possess. You need only say:

At the pike's good pleasure,
By God's good measure—

let this or that appear! and you will get it at once."

So the peasant put the pike back into the water, went to his hut, sat down at the table and said:

"At the pike's good pleasure,
By God's good measure—

let the table be covered and my dinner ready."

Then from somewhere or other all sorts of dishes and drinks appeared on the table, enough to please a Tsar, and a Tsar would not have been ashamed of it. So the poor man crossed himself, said "Glory be to Thee, O Lord! now I can break the fast." So he went to the church, attended Matins and Mass, turned back and again broke his fast, ate and drank as well, went outside the door and sat at the counter.

Just about then the Princess had an idea that she would go abroad in the streets, and she went with her attendants and maids of honour, and for the sake of the holy festival went to give alms to the poor; she gave to them all but forgot the poor peasant. Then he said to himself:

"At the pike's good pleasure,
Of God's good treasure—

let the Tsarévna bear a child." And at the word that very instant the Tsarévna became pregnant, and in ten months she bore a son.

Then the Tsar began to ask her, "Do acknowledge with whom you have been guilty."

Then the Tsarévna wept and swore in every way that she had been guilty with nobody. "I do not know myself," she said, "why the Lord has chastised me."

The Tsar asked, but found nothing out.

Soon a boy was born who grew not by days but by hours; and at the end of a week he could already talk. So the Tsar summoned all the *boyárs* and the senators from every part of the kingdom to show them the

youth, but none of them acknowledged that he was the father.

"No," the boy answered, "none of them is my father."

Then the Tsar bade the maids of honour and attendants take him up to every courtyard, through all the streets, and to show him to all manner of people. So the attendants and maids of honour took the youth through all the courtyards, through all the streets they went. But the boy said nothing.

At last they came to the poor peasant's hut. As soon as the boy saw that peasant, he at once stretched out his little hands and said "*Tyátya, Tyátya!*" Then they told the Emperor of this, and they summoned the poor man into the palace, and the Tsar began to inquire of him, "Acknowledge on oath, is this your boy?"

"No, he is God's son."

Then the Tsar was angry and married the poor man to the Princess, and after the wedding he set them both with the child in a big tub, smeared it with tar, and sent it out into the open sea. So the tub sailed on the open sea, and the boisterous winds carried and bore it to a distant shore. When the poor man heard that the water no longer moved under them, he said:

"At the pike's good pleasure,
At God's good measure—

let the barrel rest on a dry spot."

So the barrel turned round and got on to a dry spot, and they went on, following their eyes. And they went on and on, on and on, and they had nothing to eat or drink. The Princess was utterly exhausted and had pined away to a shadow, and she could hardly stand on her legs.

"Now," said the poor man, "do you know what hunger and thirst are?"

"Yes, I do," said the Princess.

"Well, this is what the poor have to endure. Yet you would not give me alms on Easter Day." Then the poor man said:

"At the pike's good pleasure,
Of God's good treasure—

let there be here a rich palace, the finest in all the world, with gardens and ponds and all sorts of pavilions."

As soon as he had spoken a rich palace appeared; faithful henchmen ran out of it and carried them in their hands, led them into the white stone rooms, and they sat down at the oaken tables with chequered linen on them. It was marvellously decorated, was this palace. On the table everything was ready, wine and sweets and made dishes. The poor man and the Tsarévna ate and drank at their will, rested them, and went for a walk into the garden.

"Everything is beautiful here," said the Princess; "the only thing still lacking is to see the birds upon our ponds."

"Wait, you shall have birds as well," answered the poor man, and he said at once:

"At the pike's good pleasure,
At God's good measure—

let twelve ducks and one drake swim on the pond, and let them have one feather of gold and another of silver, and let the drake have a diamond tuft on his forehead!" And lo and behold, on the water there were twelve ducks and one drake swimming; one feather was of gold and one feather was of silver, and the drake had a diamond tuft on his forehead.

So there the Princess and her husband lived without grief or moil, and their son grew up a big lad and began to feel in himself a giant's strength. And he asked leave

of his father and mother to go out into the white world and to seek himself a bride. They gave him leave to go, and said, "Go, my son."

So he saddled his knightly horse and set out on his road and way. And as he journeyed on he met an old woman who said, "Hail, Russian prince, where do you wish to go?"

"I am going, *bábushka*,[1] to seek a bride, but I do not know where I am to find her."

"Stay, I will tell you, my child. Do you go beyond the ocean into the thrice-tenth kingdom; there there is a king's daughter so fair, that, if you go through all the world, you will never find any one more beautiful."

So the good youth thanked the woman, went to the seashore, hired a boat, and sailed to the thrice-tenth land. He sailed, maybe far, maybe near, maybe long, maybe short—the tale is soon told but the deed is not soon done—and he at last arrived at that kingdom, and appeared before the king of it, and asked for his daughter's hand in marriage.

Then the King said to him, "You are not the only suitor for my daughter; there is another suitor, a mighty knight. If I refuse him he will destroy all of my kingdom."

"But, if you decline my offer, I will ravage your kingdom."

"What will you?—you had better measure your strength with him: to whichever of you conquers I will give my daughter."

"Very well; summon all the Tsars and Tsarévichi, all the Kings and Korolévichi, to see us wage an honourable holmgang to win your daughter."

So then hunters were sent out to all cities, and one year had not gone by before from all the neighbouring parts all the Tsars and Tsarévichi, all the Kings and

[1] Grandmother.

Korolévichi came together, as also the Tsar who had put his own daughter into the barrel and sent her out into the sea.

On the day appointed all the knights made ready for a bloody holmgang. They fought and fought, and the earth groaned at their blows, the forests bowed down and the rivers rose in waves. The Tsarévna's son first overcame his opponent and cut off his turbulent head.

Then all the royal *boyárs* ran up, took the doughty youth into their hands and led him into the palace. Next day he was married to the Korolévna. And after they had feasted at the wedding he set about inviting all the Tsars and Tsarévichi, the Kings and the Korolévichi as his guests to his father and mother. So they all came together, and they got their ships ready and sailed on the sea. The Tsarévna with her husband received her guests with honour, and they began to celebrate banquets and to be joyous. The Tsars and the Tsarévichi, the Kings and the Korolévichi, gazed at the palace and the gardens and wondered. They had never seen such wealth. Then some of them wondered when they saw the ducks and drakes, every one of them worth half a kingdom.

So the guests were fed and bethought themselves of going home, but before ever they had got to the haven, swift hunters precursed them, saying, "Our master bids you turn back again; he wishes to hold secret counsel with you."

So the Tsars and Tsarévichi, the Kings and Korolévichi, were turning back, when the master came to meet them and said: "Oh ye good folk, one of my ducks has gone: has any one of you taken it?"

"Why are you making a vain quest?" the Tsars and Tsarévichi, the Kings and Korolévichi answered; "this would be an unguestly act. Search us all over. If you find the duck on any one of us do with him

what you will; if you do not, let your own head pay for it."

"I will," said the master. And he placed them all in a row and searched them; and, as soon as he had come to the father of the Tsarévna, he said quietly:

"At the pike's good pleasure,
At God's good measure—

under the lappet of the kaftan of this Tsar, let the duck be found." So he went and lifted his kaftan and found the duck tied to the lappet; one feather was of gold, one was of silver.

Then all the Tsars and Tsarévichi, Kings and Korolévichi cried out fiercely, "Ho! ho! ho! what a deed! are Tsars turning into thieves?"

Then the Tsarévna's father swore by everything holy that as to thieving there had never been such an idea in his head. And he had no idea how the duck had come to him.

"That is a fine tale; it was found on you; you must be guilty."

Then the Tsarévna came out, burst upon her father, and acknowledged that she was his daughter whom he had given away to the poor peasant in marriage and had put into a barrel. "*Bátyushka*,"[1] she said, "you would not then believe my words, and now you have acknowledged yourself that it is possible to be guilty without guilt."

And she told him how it had all arisen. And after that they began to live, and lived all together and lived all for good and forgot bygones.

[1] Father.

THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

An archimandrite one day got up for matins; and, whilst laving his hands, saw an unclean spirit in the Holy Water, seized him and crossed him.

The devil besought him: "Let me go, Father, I will do you any service I can; I will, I will!"

So the Archimandrite said: "Will you take me to Jerusalem between High Mass and matins?"

The Archimandrite released him, and after matins was transported to Jerusalem, and was back in time for High Mass. Then inquiries were set going how this might be, and every one was astonished how he could get to Jerusalem and back so fast. They asked him about it, and he told them the story.

VAZÚZA AND VÓLGA

THE Vólga and the Vazúza had a long argument whether who was the wiser and the stronger and the more honourable of the two. They contended and quarrelled, and could not decide it. So they resolved at last: "Let us both go to sleep at the same time, and the one which wakes up earlier and first reaches the Khvalýnsk Sea is wiser and stronger and the more honourable."

So the Vólga went to sleep, and so did the Vazúza.

But at night the Vazúza got up quietly and ran away from the Vólga; she took the next nearest way and flowed off.

When the Vólga woke up she went neither hurriedly nor lagging, but in an ordinary fashion. At Zubtsov she overtook the Vazúza, and looked so threatening that the Vazúza was frightened, and owned she was the younger daughter, and begged the Vólga to take her in her arms into the Sea of Khvalýnsk.

And, to this day, the Vazúza wakes up in the spring before the Vólga, and wakes the Vólga up out of her winter sleep.

THE ENCHANTED TSARÉVICH

ONCE upon a time there was a merchant who had three daughters: it so happened he had one day to go to strange countries to buy wares, and so he asked his daughters, "What shall I bring you from beyond the seas?"

The eldest asked for a new coat, and the next one also asked for a new coat; but the youngest one only took a sheet of paper and sketched a flower on it: "Bring me, *bátyushka*,[1] a flower like this!"

So the merchant went and made a long journey to foreign kingdoms, but he could never see such a flower. So he came back home, and he saw on his way a splendid lofty palace with watch-towers, turrets, and a garden. He went a walk in the garden, and you cannot imagine how many trees he saw and flowers, every flower fairer than the other flowers. And then he looked and he saw a single one like the one which his daughter had sketched. "Oh," he said, "I will tear off and bring this to my beloved daughter: evidently there is nobody here to watch me." So he ran up and broke it off, and as soon as he had done it, in that very instant a boisterous wind arose and thunder thundered, and a fearful monster stood in front of him, a formless, winged snake with three heads.

"How dared you play the master in my garden!" cried the snake to the merchant. "Why have you broken off a blossom?"

The merchant was frightened, fell on his knees and besought pardon.

[1] Father.

"Very well," said the snake, "I will forgive you, but on condition that whoever meets you first, when you reach home, you must give me for all eternity; and, if you deceive me, do not forget, nobody can ever hide himself from me: I shall find you wherever you are."

The merchant agreed to the condition and came back home.

And the youngest daughter saw him from the window and ran out to meet him. Then the merchant hung his head, looked at his beloved daughter, and began to shed bitter tears.

"What is the matter with you? why are you weeping, *bátyushka?*"

He gave her the blossom and told what had befallen him.

"Do not grieve, *bátyushka*," said the youngest daughter, "it is God's gift: perhaps I shall fare well. Take me to the snake."

So the father took her away, set her in the palace, bade farewell, and set out home.

Then the fair maiden, the daughter of the merchant, went in the different rooms, and beheld everywhere gold and velvet; but no one was there to be seen, not a single human soul.

Time went by and went by, and the fair damsel became hungry and thought, "Oh, if I could only have something to eat!" But before ever she had thought, in front of her stood a table, and on the table were dishes and drinks and refreshments: the only thing that was not there was birds' milk. Then she sat down to the table, drank and ate, got up, and it had all vanished.

Darkness now came on, and the merchant's daughter went into the bedroom, wishing to lie down and sleep. Then a boisterous wind rustled round and the three-headed snake appeared in front of her.

"Hail, fair maiden! put my bed outside this door!"

So the fair maiden put the bed outside the door and herself lay on the bedstead.

She awoke in the morning, and again in the entire house there was not a single soul to be seen. And it all went well with her: whatever she wished for appeared on the spot.

In the evening the snake flew to her and ordered, "Now, fair maiden, put my bed next to your bedstead."

She then laid it next to her bedstead, and the night went by, and the maiden awoke, and again there was never a soul in the palace.

And for the third time the snake came in the evening and said, "Now, fair maiden, I am going to lie with you in the bedstead."

The merchant's daughter was fearfully afraid of lying on a single bed with such a formless monster. But she could not help herself, so she strengthened her heart and lay down with him.

In the morning the serpent said to her, "If you are now weary, fair maiden, go to your father and your sisters: spend a day with them, and in the evening come back to me. But see to it that you are not late. If you are one single minute late I shall die of grief."

"No, I shall not be late," said the maiden, the merchant's daughter, and descended the steps; there was a barouche ready for her, and she sat down. That very instant she arrived at her father's courtyard.

Then the father saw, welcomed, kissed her, and asked her, "How has God been dealing with you, my beloved daughter? Has it been well with you?"

"Very well, father!" And she started telling of all the wealth there was in the palace, how the snake loved her, how whatever she only thought of was in that instant fulfilled.

The sisters heard, and did not know what to do out of sheer envy.

Now the day was ebbing away, and the fair maiden made ready to go back, and was bidding farewell to her father and her sisters, saying, "This is the time I must go back: I was bidden keep to my term."

But the envious sisters rubbed onions on their eyes and made as though they were weeping: "Do not go away, sister; stay until to-morrow."

She was very sorry for her sisters, and stayed one day more.

In the morning she bade farewell to them all and went to the palace. When she arrived it was as empty as before. She went into the garden, and she saw the serpent lying dead in the pond! He had thrown himself for sheer grief into the water.

"Oh, my God, what have I done!" cried out the fair maiden, and she wept bitter tears, ran up to the pond, hauled the snake out of the water, embraced one head and kissed it with all her might. And the snake trembled, and in a minute turned into a good youth.

"I thank you, fair maiden," he said. "You have saved me from the greatest misfortune. I am no snake, but an enchanted Prince."

Then they went back to the merchant's house, were betrothed, lived long, and lived for good and happy things.

THE SNAKE PRINCESS

A Cossack was going on his road and way, and he arrived in the sleepy forest, and in that forest, in a glade, stood a hayrick. So the Cossack stood in front just to have a little rest, lay down in front of the hayrick and smoked his pipe, went on smoking, smoking, and never saw that a spark had fallen into the hay. After his rest he again mounted his horse and went on his road.

But he had gone only some dozen paces, when a flame blazed out and lit up the wood. Then the Cossack looked back steadily, and saw the hayrick burning, and in the middle of the flame a fair maiden standing, saying in a threatening voice, "Cossack, good man, save me from death!"

"How shall I save you? I see flames all around and cannot get up to you."

"Thrust your pike into the flame: I will jump out on to it."

So the Cossack thrust his pike into the flame and leapt to avoid the great heat. Then the fair maiden turned into a snake, crept on to the pike, crawled round the Cossack's neck, coiled herself round his neck three times and put her tail between her mouth. The Cossack was frightened and had no notion what he should do or what should come to him.

Then the snake spoke to him in a human voice: "Do not be frightened, good youth; bear me on your neck for seven years, and go to seek the Kingdom of Tin: when you arrive in that kingdom stay there and live there seven years more, and do not ever leave it: if you serve this service you shall be happy."

So the Cossack went to look for the Kingdom of Tin ; much time went by, much water flowed in the river, and at the end of the seventh year he at last reached a steep mountain, and on that mountain stood a castle of tin, and around the castle was a lofty white stone wall. So he climbed up the mountain, and the wall opened in front of him, and he arrived at a broad courtyard. At that same instant the snake disentangled herself from his neck, struck the grey earth, and turned into the maiden of his soul, vanished from his eyes as though she had never been there.

The Cossack stabled his horse, went into the palace, and began looking at the rooms: there were looking-glasses all about, silver and velvet, but never a soul of a man to be seen. "Ah!" thought the Cossack, "Wherever have I got to? Who will give me food and drink? I must here die of thirst and hunger." And whilst he was thinking this, lo and behold! in front of him stood a covered table, and on the table was food and drink, enough for all. So he tasted what he would, drank what he would, strengthened his body, and thought of mounting on his horse to survey. He went into the stable, and the horse was standing in the stall and was eagerly devouring oats.

Well, this affair had turned out very well after all; possibly he might go on living without any suffering. So the Cossack stayed for a very, very long time in the tin castle, until he became wearied unto death: it might be a joke, but he was always alone and could never exchange as much as a whisper with anybody. So, from sheer grief, he drank himself drunk and thought he would go out into the free world. But wherever he ventured forth there were lofty walls, with neither an entrance nor an exit. So he grew very angry, and the doughty youth took his cudgel, went into the palace and began knocking about the looking-glasses and mirrors, tearing

up the velvet, breaking the chairs, shattering the silver. Possibly, he thought, the owner might come and let him free. But no, never a soul appeared!

Then the Cossack lay down to sleep. Next day he woke up, went for a walk and a saunter, and he thought he would like to have some food, and he looked around: there was nothing to be had. "Ah!" he thought, "The slave rains on herself the blows if unfaithfully she mows. I smoked to death yesterday, and to-day I must starve." He had despaired. And that very instant food and drink stood ready for him.

Three days went by: the Cossack slept in the morning, and then looked out of the window, and his good horse stood saddled at the steps. What did that mean? So he washed and dressed, prayed to God, took his long pike and went into the open courtyard.

Suddenly, from somewhere or other, the fair maiden appeared and said, "Health to you, good youth: the seven years are over. You saved me from my perdition and my end. Now, listen to me: I am a king's daughter; Koshchéy the Deathless fell in love with me, took me away from my father and from my mother, wished to marry me, but I always laughed at him. Then he grew angry, and he turned me into a wild snake: I thank you for your long service. We will fare forth to my father's court; he will wish to reward you with gold from his treasury and with precious stones: but do you take nothing of them. Simply ask for the keg which is lying in his cellar."

"But what is the use of that?"

"If you turn that keg to the right a palace appears forthwith, if you turn it to the left, it vanishes."

"Very well," said the Cossack.

So he mounted his steed, set himself and the fair princess on it, and the lofty walls moved away from before him, and they set out on their road and way.

May be long, may be short, at last they arrived at the kingdom named: the king saw his daughter and was overjoyed, began expressing his thanks and gave the Cossack sacks full of gold and pearls: but the doughty youth answered him, "I desire neither gold nor pearls, give me as a remembrance of you simply the keg which is lying in your cellar."

"You ask for a great gift, brother; but I must do what you say, for my daughter is dearer to me than all else that I have here. I do not regret the barrel; take it and go with God."

So the Cossack took the royal gift and set out to roam through the white world. He went on and on, and he met an ancient old man on the way: the old man answered him, "Give me food and drink, good youth!"

So the Cossack leapt from his horse, undid the keg, turned it to the right, and a miraculous palace appeared on the spot: both of them went into the painted rooms and sat on covered chairs. "Ho, ye my faithful servants!" cried out the Cossack, "give food and drink to this guest." Before ever the words were uttered, the servants brought an entire ox and three casks of beer.

The old man set to and gourmandised, making the best of it. He ate the entire ox, and he drank the three casks of beer, croaked and said, "That was a small gift: still I cannot help it. I thank you for the bread and salt." Then they went out of the palace, and the Cossack turned his keg to the left, and there was no sign of the palace.

"Let us exchange," said the old man to the Cossack. "I will give you a sword, and you give me the keg: what is the use of the keg to you? This is a sword which slays of itself: you need only wave it, and however incalculable the force may be it will slay them all in front of it. You see that forest? Shall I show you what it can do?" Then the old man drew his sword and said to it, "Set to

work, self-slaying sword, and despoil all the dreamy forest." So the sword flew out of his hands, cut down the trees, and laid them all down in regular boards. Then, after it had cut them down, it came back to its master.

So the Cossack did not long bethink him, but gave the old man his keg and took the self-slaying sword, waved the sword, and killed the old man. Then he tied the keg to his saddle, mounted his horse, and thought he would go back to the King. But just then a terrible enemy was besieging the capital city of that King, and the Cossack saw an incalculable host and array, waved his sword and said, "Self-slaying sword, serve me a service and spill the hostile host." And then there was a fine sight—heads flying about, blood flowing freely—and within one hour all the field was covered with corpses.

Then the King came out, kissed him, and decided to give him the fair princess to wife.

It was a gorgeous wedding. I was there at the wedding. I drank mead and wine: it flowed up to my whiskers, but it never entered my mouth.

BEER AND BREAD

In a certain kingdom, in a certain State, there once lived a rich peasant, and he had much money and bread; he used to lend money on interest to the poor husbandmen of his village. And, if he gave corn, then it had to be returned in full in the summer; and in addition to that, for every three pecks the debtor had to work two days on the lord's field.

And one day it happened that there was a festival in the Church, and the peasants began brewing beer for the feast. But in this village there was a peasant who was so poor that there was no poorer to be found. And there he sat in the evening with his wife on the eve of the festival in his little hut. He was thinking: "What shall I do? All the good folk are now gadding about making merry, and we have not a crust of bread in our house. I might have gone to the rich man and asked him for a loan; but he would not trust me. Now what shall I do, I so woebegone!" And he thought and thought, and he left the bench and stood in front of the icon, and sighed a heavy sigh. "Lord," he said, "have forgiveness on my sins, for I cannot buy any oil with which to fill the lamp in front of Thy icon for Thy feast."

And after a little while, an old man came into the hut.

"Hail, master," he said. "Hail, old man! Can I stay the night here?"

"If you will. Stay the night if you like. But, Gossip, I have not a crust of bread in my house, and I cannot feed you."

"Never mind, master, I have three crusts of bread, and meat: give me a ladle of water. I will take a taste of the loaf and a sup of the water, and we shall be satisfied."

So the old man sat down on the bench, and spoke.

"Why are you so sad, master? What has made you melancholy?"

"Old man," the master answered, "why should I not be heavy?—it is God's gift. We were so looking forward to the feast. All the good folk are making merry and rejoicing, but we are clean swept out. All around me and within there is emptiness."

"Well, be of good cheer," said the old man; "go to the rich peasant and ask whatever you require of him as a debt."

"No, I cannot go, for he will not give it."

"Go," the old man insisted. "Fear nothing. Ask him for three pecks of malt, and we will brew the beer together."

"But it is so late. How shall we brew beer?—the feast is to be to-morrow."

"Do what I say. Go to the rich peasant and ask for the three pecks of malt. He will give it you at once. No, he cannot refuse it. And to-morrow you shall have beer so good at the feast—better than any you shall find throughout the village."

What could the poor man say? He got up, took his sack under his arm, and went up to the rich peasant.

He went into the rich man's *izbá*,[1] bowed down, besought him by his name and his father's name, and asked him for the loan of three pecks of malt, as he wanted to brew beer for the festival.

"Why did you not think of it sooner?" the rich man replied. "How can you do it now, for this is the eve of the festival?"

[1] Hut.

"Never mind, Gossip," the poor man replied; "if you will be so good, I and my wife will still brew something together, and can drink together and celebrate the festival."

The rich man gave him three pecks of malt and poured them into his sack. The poor man lifted the sack on to his shoulders and went home and recounted how things had gone.

"Now, master," his old guest said, "you shall have a feast. Is there a well at your door?"

"There is," said the peasant.

"Well, we will go to your well and brew the beer. Bring your sack and follow me."

So they went out to the courtyard up to the well.

"Pour it all in there," the old man said.

"Why should we hurl all this good stuff into the well?" the master replied, "for there are only three pecks, and it will all be thrown away for nothing."

"It is the best thing you can do."

"We shall not do any good—we shall only sully the water."

"Listen to me, and do what I say: there is nothing to fear."

So what could he do? He simply had to pour all his malt into the well.

"Now," the old man said, "formerly there was water in the well, and to-morrow it will be beer. Now, master, we will go into the *izbá*[1] and lie down to sleep, for the morning is wiser than the evening, and to-morrow you will have such good beer for dinner that one glass will make you drunk."

So they waited until the morning, and then when dinner-time came round the old man said: "Well, master, get as many tubs as you can, and stand them round the well and fill them all full of beer, and then

[1] Hut.

call every one in to drink, and you shall have a really riotous feast."

And the peasant went and called all his neighbours and asked for tubs.

"What do you want all these tubs and pails for?" they asked him.

"Oh, I really want them at once, as I have not vessels enough to hold my beer."

And the neighbours whispered: "What on earth does he mean? Is the good fellow gone mad? There is not a crust of bread in his house, and he is still chattering about beer."

Well, somehow or other, he got twenty pails and tubs together, put them all round the well, and began to haul them up. And the beer turned out so fine, finer than ever anybody could think or guess, or any tale could tell. And he filled all the tubs to the very brim, and the well was as full as ever. And he began to cry out aloud and to call guests to his door.

"Come to me, good Christians, and drink strong beer here, such beer as you never saw in your life!"

And the people looked round. "What on earth was he up to? Surely you take water out of a well, and he calls it beer? Anyhow, let's go and see, whatever knavery it may be." So they all rushed up to the tubs, and they began to ladle it out and to look at it. Evidently, after all, it must be beer. And they said: "Such beer we have never drunk before!" His courtyard was full of the village folk. And the master was not at a loss to ladle beer out of the well for himself, and treated all of his guests right royally.

When the rich peasant heard of this, he came to the poor man's courtyard, tasted the beer, and began to ask the poor man: "Please to tell me how ever you managed to make such magnificent beer?"

"Oh, there was not any cleverness about it," the poor

man answered. "It is the simplest thing in the world. When I took your three pecks from you I simply went and threw them into the well. Formerly it was water, and in a single night it all became beer."

"Well," the rich man thought, "I will go home and I will do the same."

So he went home, and he ordered all of his servants to take all of the best malt out of his granaries, and throw it into the well. And his husbandmen threw ten sacks of malt into the well.

"Now," the rich man said, and rubbed his hands, "I shall have finer beer than the poor man."

So the next time he went out to his courtyard and up to the well, sampled it, and looked. It was water before, and it was still water; only it was rather dirtier. "I don't quite understand this: I put too little malt into it, so I will add some more," the rich man thought, and he ordered his workmen to put five more sacks into the well. They were all thrown in, and it was all no good: he had simply wasted all of his malt.

And when the feast had passed by the water in the poor peasant's well was as pure as ever, just as if nothing had happened.

Once again the old man came to the poor peasant and said: "Listen, master, have you sown your corn this year?"

"No, grandfather, I have not sown a single grain."

"Well, now go to the rich man and ask him for three pecks of every kind of corn. We will eat with you in the fields, and we will then sow the corn."

"How shall we sow it now?" the poor man answered. "It is now the very midst of winter and the frost is crackling."

"Never mind about that. Go and do as I say. I brewed you beer, and I will sow you corn."

So the poor man went once more to the rich peasant

and asked him as a debt for three pecks of every kind of corn. When he came back he told his aged guest:

"Here it all is, grandfather."

So they went outside to the fields, scattered it according to its nature on the peasant's lots; and lo and behold! they went and threw all the grains on the white snow—every single grain.

The old man said to the peasant: "Go home and wait until the summer; you will have bread enough."

So the poor man went to his hut and became the laughing-stock of the village for sowing his corn in the winter. "Look at him! What a fool he is! He has forgotten when he ought to sow: he didn't think of sowing in the autumn." He never minded, but waited for the spring, and the warm days came, and the snow melted, and the grain sprouts appeared.

"Come now," the poor man said, "I will go and see what my stretch of land looks like." So he went to his stretch of land and saw such splendid blades of corn, at which any soul might rejoice. And on all the acres of the others it was not half as fine. "Glory be to God!" the peasant cried; "I am now looking up!"

Soon the time of harvest came by, and all good folk began to gather their corn, and the old man also went and busied himself, and called his wife to help him. And he could not get through, but had to summon for the harvesting all the husbandmen, and to give half of his corn away; and all the peasants were astonished at the poor man, for he had not sown his land, but had scattered the seeds in the winter and his corn had been splendid. The poor peasant had put his affairs straight and had managed to live without any trouble; and whatever he required for his household, he went into the town, sold quarters and quarters of corn, and bought whatever he required, and repaid the rich peasant his debt in full.

Then the rich peasant began to think: "Heigh-ho! I shall also begin sowing in the winter; possibly I shall have corn as fine." So he waited to the very day on which the poor peasant in the previous year had sown his corn, went and took from his bins quarters of different sorts of corn, went out into the fields and scattered it all on the snow. He covered the fields entirely, but a storm arose at night, and mighty winds blew, and wafted all the corn from his land away on to the other fields.

Then there came a fine spring, and the rich man went to his fields and saw them bare, and saw that his own land was naked and waste; there was not a single blade that appeared, and on all the other strips where there had been no ploughing and no sowing, you never saw such a fine green crop! Then the rich man began to think: "Lord, I have spent much on corn, and it has all been in vain, and my debtors have all neither ploughed nor sown, and their corn grows of itself. Needs I must be a great sinner!"

SORROW

ONCE upon a time, in a wretched village, there lived two peasants, who were own brothers. One was poor, however, and the other rich. The rich man settled in the town, built himself a fine house, and became a merchant. Sometimes the poor brother had not a crumb of bread and the children (each of whom was smaller than the others) cried and begged for something to eat. From morning to evening the peasant trudged away like a fish on ice, but it was all of no good.

One day he said to his wife: "I am going into the town, in order to beg my brother to help me."

So he came to the rich man and asked him: "Brother, help me in my sorrow, for my wife and children sit at home without any bread and are starving."

"If you will work for me this week I will help you."

What was the poor fellow to do? He set to work, cleaned out the courtyard, groomed the horses, carried the water, hewed the wood. When the week had gone by the rich man gave him a loaf of bread. "There, you have a reward for your pains."

"I thank you for it," said the poor man, and bowed down, and was going home.

"Stay," the rich brother said to him: "Come with your wife to-morrow and be my guests. To-morrow is my name-day."

"Oh, brother, how can I? As you know, merchants who wear boots and furs come to see you, whilst I have only bast shoes, and I only have my grey coat."

"Never mind! Come to-morrow; I shall still have room for you."

"Good brother! I will come."

So the poor man went home, gave his wife the loaf of bread, and said: "Listen, wife. To-morrow you and I are to be guests."

"Who has asked us?"

"My brother. To-morrow is his name-day."

"All right, let's go."

Next day they got up and went into the town. They came to the rich man's door, greeted him, and sat down on a bench. And at table there were many guests, and the master of the house entertained them all magnificently. Only he forgot the poor brother and his wife, and he gave them nothing. They sat there, and could only look at the others eating and drinking. When the meal was over the guests rose from table and bowed their thanks to the master and mistress, and the poor man also stood up from his bench and bowed down deep before his brother; and the guests went home drunken and merry, noisily singing songs.

But the poor man went home with an empty stomach. "We too must sing a song!" he said to his wife.

"Oh, you fool, the others sing, for they have had a good dinner and have drunk well. Why should we sing?"

"Well, after all, I was a guest at my brother's name-day, and I am ashamed of going back so silently. If I sing they will all think, anyhow, that I have been served as well."

"Sing if you will! I shall not!"

So the peasant sang and sang, and he heard two voices. So he stopped and asked his wife: "Are you helping me to sing with a thin voice?"

"What are you thinking of? I was doing nothing of the sort."

"What was it, then?"

"I don't know," said the wife. "Sing. I will listen."

So he went on singing by himself, and again the two voices were heard. So he stayed still, and said, "Sorrow, are you aiding me to sing?"

And Sorrow answered: "Yes, I am aiding you."

"Now, Sorrow, we will go on together."

"Yes, I will ever remain with you."

So the peasant went home. But Sorrow called him into the inn.

He said: "I have no money."

"Never mind, Hodge; what do you want money for?" Why, you still have half of a fur; what is the use of it? It will soon be summer, and you will be no longer requiring it. We will go into the inn and drink it up."

So the peasant and Sorrow went into the inn, and they drank up the half-fur. Next day Sorrow groaned and said he had a headache, a fearful headache, owing to last night's treat. And he enticed the peasant once more to bib wine.

"But I have no money!"

"There is no need of money. Take your sleigh and your carriage; that will be sufficient for us!"

It was not any good. The peasant could not escape Sorrow. So he took his sleigh and his carriage, drove them to the inn, and drank them with Sorrow. And in the morning Sorrow groaned yet further, and reduced the master to further drinking; and the peasant drank away his ploughshare and his plough.

One month had gone by, and he had drunk all his property away, pledged his *izbá*[1] to a neighbour, and spent all the money in the inn. Then Sorrow came to him once more. "Let us go to the inn!"

"No, Sorrow, I have no more."

[1] Hut.

"Why, your wife has two sarafáns, one will be sufficient for her."

So the peasant took the sarafán, drank it up; and he thought: "Now I have not anything left, neither house, nor clothes, nor anything else for myself or my wife!"

Next morning Sorrow woke up and saw that there was nothing more he could take. So he said: "Master, what is your wish? Go to your neighbour and borrow a pair of oxen and a carriage."

So the peasant went to his neighbour and said, "Can you lend me a car and a pair of oxen for a short time, and I will do a week's work for them?"

"What do you want with them?"

"To fetch wood out of the forest."

"Well, then, take them, but don't overload them."

"Oh, of course not, uncle!"

So the peasant took the oxen, went with Sorrow into the carriage, and drove into the field.

"Do you know the big stone in this field?" Sorrow asked.

"Oh, yes!"

"Well, then, drive up to it."

So they arrived at the stone and dismounted. Sorrow bade the peasant lift up the stone, and he aided him in the work. Under the stone there was a hollow filled with gold.

"Now, what do you see?" said Sorrow. "Load it all up quickly on to the coach."

So the peasant set to work sharply, loaded all the gold up, to the very last ducats. And when he noticed there was not anything left, he said, "Sorrow, is there no more gold there?"

"I don't see any."

"Down there in the corner I see something glittering."

"No; I cannot see anything."

"Get down into the pit, and you will see it."

So Sorrow went into the pit, and as soon as he was in the peasant cast the stone in. "Things will now go better," said the peasant, "for if I were to take you back with me, Sorrow, you would drink up all of this money!"

So the peasant went home, and he poured out the gold in the cellar. He took the oxen back to his neighbour, and he began to set up house again, bought a wood, built a big house, and became twice as rich as his brother. Soon he rode to the town, in order to invite his brother and his sister-in-law to his own name-day.

"Whatever do you mean?" said the rich brother, "why, you have nothing to eat, and you are giving festivals!"

"I had nothing to eat before, but I am now as well off as you are."

"All right; I will come."

So next day the rich man, with his wife, went to the name-day; and they saw that the poor starveling had a big new house, much finer than many merchants' houses. And the peasant gave them a rich dinner, with all kinds of meat and drink.

So the rich man asked his brother: "Tell me, how did you become so rich?"

Then the peasant told him the bare truth—how Sorrow had followed on his heels and how he and his sorrow had gone into the inn, and he had drunk away all his goods and chattels to the last shred, until he had only his soul left in his body; and then how Sorrow had showed him the treasure-trove in the field, and he had thus freed himself from the thraldom of Sorrow.

And the rich man became envious and thought: "I will go into the field and will lift the stone up.

Sorrow will rend my brother's body asunder, so that he cannot then brag of his riches in front of me."

So he left his wife behind and drove into the field, to the big stone. He whirled it off to the side and bowed down to see what was under the stone. And he had hardly bowed down, when Sorrow sprang up and sat on his shoulders.

"O!" Sorrow cried. "You wanted to leave me here under the earth. Now I shall never depart from you."

"Listen, Sorrow: I was not the person who locked you up here!"

"Who was it, then, if it was not you?"

"My brother. I came in order to set you free."

"No, you are lying and deceiving me again. This time it shall not come off."

So Sorrow sat fast on the wretched merchant's shoulders. He brought Sorrow with him home, and his household went from bad to worse. Sorrow began early in the morning enticing the merchant into the beer-house day after day, and much property was drunk away.

"This life is absolutely unbearable!" thought the merchant. "I have done Sorrow too good a service. I must now set myself free from him. How shall I?" So he thought and he thought it out. He went into his courtyard, cut two oak wedges, took a new wheel, and knocked one wedge from one end into the axle. He went up to Sorrow. "Now, Sorrow, must you lie about like that?"

"What should I be doing? What else is there to do?"

"Come into the courtyard; let us play hide-and-seek."

This suited Sorrow down to the ground, and at first the merchant hid and Sorrow found him at once.

Then Sorrow had to hide. "You will not find me so easily: I can hide myself in any crack,"

"What!" said the merchant. "Why, you could never get into this wheel, much less into a crack!"

"What! I could not get into the wheel? Just look how I manage to hide myself in it!"

So Sorrow crept into the wheel, and the merchant took the other oak wedge and drove it into the hub from the other side, and threw the wheel, with Sorrow inside, into the river. Sorrow was drowned, and the merchant lived as before.

IVÁSHKO AND THE WISE WOMAN

ONCE there lived an old man and an old dame, and they only had one little son, and you can't imagine how they loved him.

One day Iváshechko asked his mother and father, "Please may I go and catch fish?"

"What nonsense! you're much too little yet: you might get drowned, and that would be a fine story."

"Oh, no, I won't get drowned. I'll go and catch you a fish: let me go!"

So grandfather gave him a little white shirt to wear, with a big red sash, and off he went. Soon he was sitting in a boat and singing:

> Little boat, little boat, sail far away,
> O'er the blue water away and away.

The little skiff sailed far and far away and Iváshechko started fishing. Soon, how long I don't know, up came the mother to the shore and said:

> Iváshechko, Iváshechko, my little son,
> Up to the shore let your little boat run:
> Here is some drink and here is a bun!

And Iváshechko said:

> Little boat, little boat, sail to the shore:
> My mother's calling me.

The little skiff sailed up to the shore; the woman took the fish and fed her little boy, changed his shirt and sash

and sent him out again to catch fish. And there he sat on the boat and sang:

Little boat, little boat, sail far away,
O'er the blue water away and away.

The little boat sailed out so far away, and Iváshechko started fishing. Soon the grandfather came to the shore and called his son:

Iváshechko, Iváshechko, my little son,
Up to the shore let your little boat run:
Here is some drink and here is a bun!

And Iváshechko said:

Little boat, little boat, sail to the shore:
For father's calling me!

The little skiff sailed up to the shore; the grandfather took the fish and fed his little boy, changed his shirt and sash and sent him out again to catch fish. And there he sat on the boat and sang:

Little boat, little boat, sail far away,
O'er the blue water away and away.

Now the wise woman saw how his grandparents called Iváshechko, and wanted to get hold of the boy. So she came to the shore and called out:

Iváshechko, Iváshechko, my little son,
Up to the shore let your little boat run:
Here is some drink and here is a bun!

But Iváshechko knew the voice, and whose voice it was. So he sang:

Little boat, little boat, sail far away,
O'er the blue water away and away.
The Evil Woman's calling me

So the wise woman saw she must act the mother's voice, so she ran to the smith and asked him, "Smith, just forge me a thin little voice like the one Iváshechko's mother has, or I'll eat you up!" So the smith forged the voice just like the mother's. So up she went to the shore and sang:

Iváshechko, Iváshechko, my little son,
Up to the shore let your little boat run:
Here is some drink and here is a bun!

Iváshechko sailed up; she took the fish and seized and took Iváshechko himself away. When she reached home, she told her daughter Alyónka: "Just make my stove nice and hot and cook Iváshechko all through. I'll go assemble my guests."

And Alyónka heated the stove very hot and told Iváshechko: "Come and sit on the shovel."[1]

"I'm too young and stupid," Iváshechko answered; "show me how to sit on the shovel."

"Oh, that's easy enough!" said Alyónka; and as soon as she was on Iváshechko shoved her into the stove, slammed the door to and went out of the hut, and climbed a great big tall oak tree.

The wise woman came with her guests and knocked at the hut; there was no reply, no one to open the door. "Oh, confound Alyónka; she must have gone out to play." The wise woman climbed up into the window, opened the door and admitted her guests, opened the oven door, took out Alyónka, who was well cooked, and they all sat down to table and ate and ate and drank, and at last went out to take a turn on the grass:

"I am dancing, I am prancing, I have eaten Iváshechko's flesh."

Then Iváshechko interrupted from the top of the

[1] Shovels are used to insert loaves and pots deep into the oven.

tree: "Dance and prance! you have eaten Alyónka's flesh."

"Did I hear anything?" said the wise woman; "it must have been the leaves rustling." Again the wise woman said, "I am dancing, I am prancing, I have eaten Iváshechko's flesh!"

Iváshechko repeated: "Dance and prance! you have eaten Alyónka's flesh!"

So at last she looked up and saw Iváshechko, and began to gnaw at the oak-tree on which he was sitting, and gnawed and gnawed, broke two of her front teeth, and went to the smithy. She called the smith. "Smith, smith, make me some iron teeth, or I'll eat you up."

The smith made her two iron teeth.

So back she went and gnawed away at the tree, and as soon as she had gnawed it through Iváshechko just jumped on to the next oak-tree, whilst the one the witch had gnawed through fell down.

Then the wise woman gnawed and gnawed at this tree, and gnawed and gnawed, broke the two front teeth, and went to the smithy. She called the smith: "Smith, smith, make me two more iron teeth, or I'll eat you up."

The smith made her two more iron teeth.

So she went back and gnawed away at the tree.

So Iváshechko did not know what to do. He looked up and saw geese and swans flying; he asked them:

Geese and swans, geese and swans,
Waft me away on your pinions:
Take me home to my mother and father;
With my mother and my father
There is plenty to eat
And life is sweet!

"The next covey may take you," said the birds.

So he waited. And another flock came, and he repeated:

Geese and swans, geese and swans,
Waft me away on your pinions:
Take me home to my mother and father;
With my mother and my father
There is plenty to eat
And life is sweet!

"Perhaps the last may take you."

So he waited on, and as the third flock appeared he said:

Geese and swans, geese and swans,
Waft me away on your pinions:
Take me home to my mother and father;
With my mother and my father
There is plenty to eat
And life is sweet!

They took him home on their wings up to the hut and placed Iváshechko in the loft.

Early next day the woman cooked a pancake on the stove, and whilst cooking it thought of her poor little boy Iván, and said: "Where is my Iváshechko? I dreamed of him last night!"

And gaffer said: "I dreamed last night the geese and swans were wafting our little Iván home."

She had finished the pancake by now, and said: "Now, gaffer, we'll share it, this bit for you, this bit for me!"

"And none for me!" Iváshechko chimed in.

"This is for you, and this is for me!"

"And none for me!"

"What's that noise, gaffer?" the woman asked.

The grandfather clattered up into the loft and found Iváshechko. They were overjoyed, asked him all about everything, and lived a jolly life.

NEVER-WASH

ONCE upon a time there was a soldier who had served through three campaigns, but had never earned as much as an addled egg, and was then put on the retired list. Then, as he went on the road marching on and on, he became tired and sat down by a lake. And, as he rested, he began thinking things out: "Where shall I now betake myself, and how shall I feed myself, and how the devil shall I enter into any service?"

As soon as he had spoken these words a little devil rose up at once in front of him and said, "Hail, soldier, what do you wish? Did you just now not say that you wished to become one of our servants? Why, soldier, come up and be hired: we will pay you well."

"What is the work?"

"Oh, the work is easy enough: for fifteen years you must not shave, you must not have your hair cut, you must not blow your nose, and you must not change your garb. If you serve this service, then we will go to the king, who has three daughters. Two of them are mine, but the third shall be yours."

"Very well," said the soldier, "I will undertake the contract; but I require in return to get anything my soul hankers after."

"It shall be so; be at peace; we shall not be in default."

"Well, let it befall at once. Carry me at once into the capital and give me a pile of money; you know yourself how little of these goods a soldier ever gets."

So the little devil dashed into the lake, got out a pile of gold, and instantaneously carried the soldier into the great city, and all at once he was there!

"What a fool I have been!" said the soldier: "I have not done any service, no work, and I now have the money!" So he took a room, never cut his hair, never shaved, never wiped his nose, never changed his garb, and he lived on and grew wealthy, so wealthy he did not know what to do with his money. What was he to do with his silver and gold? "Oh, very well, I will start helping the poor: possibly they may pray for my soul." So the soldier began distributing alms to the needy, to the right and to the left, and he still had money over, however much he gave away! His fame spread over the whole kingdom, came to the ears of all.

So the soldier lived for fourteen years, and on the fifteenth year the Tsar's exchequer gave out. So he summoned the soldier. So the soldier came to him unwashed, unshaved, uncombed, with his nose unwiped and his dress unchanged.

"Health, your Majesty!"

"Listen, soldier. You, they say, are good to all folks: will you lend me some money? I have not enough to pay my troops. If you will I will make you a general at once."

"No, your Majesty, I do not wish to be a general; but if you will do me a favour, give me one of your daughters as my wife, and you shall have as much money as you wish for the Treasury."

So the king began to think: he was very fond of his daughters, but still he could not do anything whatsoever without money. "Well," he said, "I agree. Have a portrait taken of yourself; I will show it to my daughters and ask which of them will take you."

So the soldier returned, had the portrait painted,

which was feature for feature, unshaved, unwashed, uncombed, his nose unwiped, and in his old garb, and sent it to the Tsar.

Now, the Tsar had three daughters, and the father summoned them and showed them the soldier's portrait. He said to the eldest, "Will you go and marry him? He will redeem me from very great embarrassment."

The Tsarévna saw what a monstrous animal had been painted, with tangled hair, uncut nails and unwiped nose. "I certainly won't!" she said, "I would sooner go to the Devil." And from somewhere or other the Devil appeared, stood behind her with pen and paper, heard what she said, and entered her soul on his register.

Then the father asked the next daughter, "Will you go and marry the soldier?"

"What! I would rather remain a maiden; I would rather tie myself up with the Devil than go with him." So the Devil went and inscribed her soul as well.

Then the father asked his youngest daughter, and she answered, "Evidently this must be my lot: I will go and marry him and see what God shall give."

Then the Tsar was very blithe at this, and he went and told the soldier to make ready for the betrothal, and he sent him twelve carts to carry the money away.

Then the soldier made use of his devil: "There are twelve carts; pile them all high at once with gold." So the devil ran into the lake and the unholy ones set to work. Some of them brought up one sack, some two, and they soon filled the carts and sent them to the Tsar, into his palace.

Then the Tsar looked, and now summoned the soldier to him every day, sat with him at one table, and ate and drank with him. When they got ready for the marriage the term of fifteen years was over. So he called the little devil and said, "Now my service is over: turn me into a youth."

So the dèvil cut him up into little bits, threw them into a cauldron, and began to brew him—brewed him, washed him and collected all his bones, one by one, in the proper way, every bone with every bone, every joint with every joint, every nerve with every nerve: then he sprinkled them with the water of life, and the soldier arose, such a fine young man as no tale can tell and no pen can write. He then married the youngest Tsarévna, and they began to live a merry life of good.

I was at the wedding: I drank mead and beer. They also had wine, and I drank it to the very dregs.

. . . . . .

But the little devil ran back into the lake, for his elder hauled him over the coals to answer for what he had done with the soldier. "He has served out his period faithfully and honourably: he has never once shaved himself, nor cut his hair, nor wiped his nose, nor changed his clothes."

Then the elder was very angry. He said, "In fifteen years you were not able to corrupt the soldier! Was all the money given in vain? What sort of a devil will you be after this?" And he had him thrown into the burning pitch.

"Oh no, please, grandfather," said the grandson, "I have lost the soldier's soul, but I have gained two others."

"What?"

"Look: the soldier thought of marrying a Tsarévna; the two elder daughters both declined and said they would rather marry a devil than the soldier. So there they are, and they belong to us."

So the grandfather-devil approved what the grandson-imp had done, and set him free. "Yes," he said, "you know your business very well indeed."

CHRIST AND THE GEESE

One day St. Peter and Christ were out walking together. St. Peter was deep in thought and suddenly said: "How fine it must be to be God! If for half a day I might be God, then let me be Peter all the rest of my days!"

The Lord smiled. "Your will shall be granted. Be God until nightfall."

They were approaching a village, and saw a peasant girl driving a flock of geese. She drove them to the meadow, left them there, and hurried back home.

"Are you going to leave the geese by themselves?" St. Peter asked.

"Well, what?—guard them to-day! It's a feast-day."

"But who will look after the geese?"

"God Almighty, maybe," she said, and ran away.

"Peter, you have heard her," said the Saviour. "I should have been delighted to go with you to the village feast, but then the geese might come to some harm. You are God until nightfall, and must stay and watch them."

Poor Peter! He was angry; but had to stay and guard the geese. He never again wished to be God.

CHRIST AND FOLK-SONGS

ONE day Christ and St. Peter were walking about the earth and came to a village. In one house folks were singing so finely that Christ stayed to listen, whilst St. Peter went on. He turned back and found Christ still at His post. St. Peter went on again, and looked back: Christ was still listening. St. Peter went on again and then glanced back a third time—and Christ was still listening. Then he went back and heard a splendid folk-song in the house, stayed a while, and went on to another house where there also was singing. There St. Peter stayed, but Christ passed on. St. Peter hurried up and looked astounded.

"What's the matter?" asked Christ.

"I could not make out why you stopped to listen to folk-songs and passed by the house where hymns were being sung."

"Oh, my dear son," said Christ, "there was a good scent there in the one house where folk-songs were being sung; but there was no reverence about the house where they were chanting hymns."

THE DEVIL IN THE DOUGH-PAN

ONCE a woman was kneading bread, but had forgotten to say the blessing. So the demon, Potánka,[1] ran up and sat down in it. Then she recollected she had kneaded the dough without saying the blessing, went up to it and crossed herself; and Potánka wanted to escape, but could not anyhow, because of the blessing. So she put the leavened dough through a strainer and threw it out into the street, with Potánka inside. The pigs turned him over and over, and he could not escape for three whole days. At last he tore his way out through a crack in the dough and scampered off without looking behind him.

He ran up to his comrades, who asked him: "Where have you been, Potánka?"

"May that woman be accursed!" he said.

"Who?"

"The one who was kneading her dough and had made it without saying the proper blessing; so I ran up and squatted in it. Then she laid hold of me and crossed herself, and after three livelong days I got out, the pigs poking me about and I unable to escape! Never again will I get into a woman's dough."

[1] "*n*" and "*k*" to be sounded distinct as in *pin-case*.

THE SUN, THE MOON, AND CROW CROWSON

ONCE upon a time there was an old man and an old woman who had three daughters. The old man went into the loft for some groats, and took them home, but there was a hole in the sack, and the groats were running and running out of the sack.

The old man went home, and the old woman asked, "Where are the groats?" But all the groats had dripped out.

So the old man went to collect them, and said, "If only the Sun would warm the grain, and the moon show its light on it, and Crow Crowson help me to get the groats, I would give my eldest daughter to the little Sun, and my middle daughter to the Moon, and my youngest to Crow Crowson." So the old man set to collecting the grain, and the Sun warmed it, and the Moon shone on it, and Vóron Vóronovich helped to collect the grain.

The old man came back home and said to the eldest daughter: "You must dress nicely and go out on the steps." So she dressed and went out on the steps. And the Sun laid hold of her. And he commanded the next daughter in the same way to dress herself finely and to stand on the steps. So she dressed herself up and went out, and the Moon seized and took away the second daughter. And he said to the third daughter, "Dress yourself prettily and stand on the steps." So she dressed herself prettily and stood on the steps, and Crow Crowson seized her and carried her away.

Then the old man said, "I think I might go and visit

my sons-in-law." So he went to the Sun, and at last he arrived there.

The Sun asked him, "With what shall I regale you?"

"Oh, I don't wish for anything!"

So the Sun bade his wife make a custard ready. So the daughter prepared the custard; the Sun sat down in the middle of the floor, and his wife put the pan on him and the custard was soon cooked. So they gave the old father refreshment.

Then the old father went back home and bade his wife make him a custard; and he sat down on the floor and commanded her to put the pan with the custard on to him.

"What are you talking about? Bake it on you!" said the old wife.

"Go on!" he replied. "Put it there; it will be baked!"

So she put the pan on him, and the custard stood there for ages and was not ever cooked, only turned sour. It was no good. So in the end the wife put the pan into the stove, and this time the custard was baked and the old man got something to eat.

Next day the old man went to stay as a guest with his second son-in-law, the Moon, and he arrived.

And the Moon said, "With what shall I regale you?"

"I do not wish for anything," said the old man.

So the Moon got the bath heated ready for him.

The old man said, "Won't it be very dark in the bath?"

"No," said the Moon to him, "quite light; only step in."

So the old man went into the bath, and the Moon twisted his little finger into a chink, and it was quite light in the bathroom. So the old man steamed himself thoroughly, went back home and told his wife to heat

the bath at night. So the old woman heated it, and he sent her there to steam herself.

"But," she said, "it will be much too dark to steam myself!"

"Go along! it will be light enough."

So the old woman went. And the old man saw how the Moon had lit the place up for him, and he went and bored a tiny hole in the bathroom and thrust his finger through it.

But there was still no light in the bath, and the old woman shrieked out to him, "Dark! much too dark!" It was not any good. So she went out, brought a lamp, and enjoyed her steam bath.

On the third day the old man went to Vóron Vóronovich. He got there.

"How shall I regale you?" asked Vóron Vóronovich.

"Oh," said the old man, "I don't want anything!"

"Well, let us come and sleep on the perch."

So the Crow put a ladder up and climbed up there with his father-in-law. Crow Crowson settled himself comfortably with his head under his wing. But as soon as ever the old man dropped off to sleep both of them fell down and were killed.

THE LEGLESS KNIGHT AND THE BLIND KNIGHT

In a certain kingdom in a certain land a Tsar and his Tsarítsa lived. They had a son called Iván Tsarévich, and the son had an attendant who was called Katomá Dyádka[1] of the oaken cap. When the Tsar and the Tsarítsa had reached a great age both of them became ill, and they felt that they would never become hale again. So they called Iván Tsarévich, and said to him: "If we die, always follow Katomá's advice, and do well by him, then you will live happily; but if you do not, you will falter and fail like a fly."

Next day the Tsar and the Tsarítsa died. Iván Tsarévich buried his parents, heeded their advice, and always took counsel with Katomá before undertaking any enterprise.

Very soon, maybe a long time, maybe short, he grew up, and he wanted to marry. He said to Katomá: "Katomá, Oaken-cap, it is so melancholy living by oneself; I want to marry."

"Tsarévich," Katomá replied, "you are of the age at which you ought to look for a bride: go into the great hall, where you will see pictures of all the Korolévny[2] and Tsarévny in the world. Gaze on them carefully, and select for yourself a bride, one who pleases you, and you shall marry her."

Iván Tsarévich went into the great hall, looked at the pictures, and he was most delighted with Anna the Fair.

[1] Uncle: term of affection. [2] Princesses.

She was so fair that she was fairer than any princess in the world. But under her portrait there was a legend: "*He who can set her a riddle she cannot solve is to marry her. Anyone whose riddle she solves dies.*"

Iván Tsarévich read the legend, and was very sad. He went up to Katomá and said: "I was in the great hall, and I selected as my bride Anna the Fair: but I do not know whether I can woo her."

"Yes, Tsarévich, it will be hard for you; if you had to go there by yourself, you would never win her. Take me. Do what I say, and all will go well."

Then Iván Tsarévich begged Katomá Oaken-cap to fare there with him, and pledged him his word of honour he would obey him in joy and sorrow.

So they set out on the way to seek Anna the Fair Tsarévna. They journeyed for one year, the second year, and the third year, and they traversed many lands. Iván Tsarévich said, "We have been so long on the journey and are at last approaching the realms of Anna the Fair, and still we have not thought out any riddles for her!"

"Time enough yet," Katomá replied.

So they rode on, and Katomá saw a purse lying on the road and said: "Iván Tsarévich, there is your riddle for the Tsarévna; give her this riddle to solve: 'Good lies on the road: we took the good with good, and set it down to our good.' That she will never solve all her life long, for every riddle she has solved at once, for she had only to look in her magical book; and she would then have your head cut off."

At last the Tsarévich and Katomá came to a lofty castle, where the fair Tsarévna lived. She was just standing at her balcony, and sent her messengers to meet them, to know whence they came and what was their will.

Iván Tsarévich answered: "I have come from my distant realm in order to woo Anna Tsarévna the Fair."

This she was told, and she bade the Tsarévich be introduced into her castle: he was to set her a riddle in front of all her councillors and her princes and *boyárs*.[1] "For I have sworn," she said, "to marry him who sets me a riddle I cannot solve: but if I guess it, then he must die." The fair Tsarévna listened to the riddle: "Good lies on the road; we took the good with good, and set it down to our good."

Anna the Fair took her conjuring book and searched it through for the riddle—looked the whole book through in vain. So the princes and *boyárs* decided that she must marry the Tsarévich. But she was very gloomy over it, yet still had to make ready. But in her heart of hearts she kept thinking: "How could I postpone the date and get rid of my bridegroom?" So she decided to tire him out through severe tasks. One day she called Iván Tsarévich to her and said: "Dear Iván Tsarévich, my chosen mate, we must get ready for the marriage. Do me a small service. In my realm there stands in a certain village a great iron column: bring it to the great kitchen and split it up into little logs as firewood for the cook."

"What do you want, Tsarévna? Have I come to cut down fuel for you? Is that my duty? Oh, my servant can see to that!" So he called Katomá, and he told him to bring the iron column into the kitchen and to hew it into small logs as fuel for the cook.

Katomá at once went, took the pillar in his two hands, brought it into the kitchen and split it up. But he kept back four iron shafts and put them into his pocket, for he thought: "Later I may make use of them!"

Next day the Tsarévna said, "Dear Tsarévich, my chosen husband, to-morrow we shall marry. I shall go in a carriage to church, and you will have a fine prancing steed given you. You must get him ready yourself."

[1] Earls.

"I must get the horse ready! Oh, my servant can do that!"

So Iván Tsarévich called Katomá, and said: "Come into the stable and command the grooms to bring the horse out; ride it, and to-morrow I will go to church on it."

But Katomá could see the guile in the Tsarévna's heart, and instantly went into the stable and ordered them to bring the horse out. Twelve grooms opened the twelve locks, undid twelve doors, and led the magical horse out by twelve chains. Katomá went up to him, and as soon as ever he had swung himself on to the horse's back the steed rose high into the air, higher than the tree-tops in the forest, lower than the clouds in heaven. But Katomá had a firm seat, and with one hand he held the mane, and with the other he fetched an iron sheet out of his pocket and struck the palfrey between the ears.

One sheet broke, then he took a second and a third; and after the third broke he was taking the fourth. The horse was so tired that it could not resist him any more, but spoke in a human voice: "Father Katomá, leave me some life, and I will come down to earth and whatever you will I will do."

"Listen then, wretched animal!" Katomá answered. "To-morrow Iván Tsarévich will ride you to his wedding. Listen! When the servants take you into the broad courtyard, and he comes up to you and lays his hand on you, stand still: do not prick your ear. When he mounts, kneel down with your hoofs on the ground, and step under him with a heavy tread as if you were bearing a burdensome load." So the horse sank half-dead on to the earth. Katomá, seated by the tail, hailed the grooms and said, "Ho, you there! grooms and coachmen, take this carrion into the stable."

Next day came, and the hour for going to church. The Tsarévna had a carriage ready, and the Tsarévich

was given the magical horse. And from all parts of the country the people had assembled in multitudes, countless multitudes, to see the bride and bridegroom leave the white stone palace. And the Tsarévna went into the carriage and was waiting to see what would happen to Iván Tsarévich. She thought to herself that the horse would prance him up against the winds, and that she could already see his bones scattered in the open fields.

Iván Tsarévich went up to the horse, laid his hand on its back, put his foot into the stirrup, and the magical horse stood there as though he were made of stone, and never pricked an ear. The Tsarévich mounted it, and the horse bowed deep to the earth. Then his twelve chains were taken off. And he stood with a heavy even tread, whilst the sweat ran down his back in streams.

"What a hero he is! What enormous strength!" all the people said as Iván Tsarévich paced by.

So the bride and the bridegroom were betrothed, and went hand-in-hand out of the church.

The Tsarévna still wanted to test her husband's strength, and squeezed his hand, but she squeezed so hard that he could not stand it, and his blood mounted to his head, and his eyes almost fell out of their sockets. "That's the manner of hero *you* are!" she thought. "Your man, Katomá Oaken-cap, has deceived me finely. But I shall soon be even with him."

Anna Tsarévna the Fair lived with her God-sent husband as a good wife should, and always listened to his words. But she was ever thinking how she might destroy Katomá. If she knew that, she could very easily dispose of the Tsarévich. But, however many slanders she might think of to tell him, Iván Tsarévich never believed her, but held Katomá fast.

One year later he said to his wife: "Dear wife, beautiful Tsarévna, I should like to go home with you."

"Yes, we will go together. I have long wished to see your kingdom."

So they set out, and Katomá sat behind the coachman. As they drove out Iván Tsarévich dozed off.

Then Anna the Fair suddenly roused him from his sleep and complained. "Listen, Iván Tsarévich: you are always asleep and notice nothing. Katomá will not obey me, but is purposely taking the horses over all the cobbles and into all the ditches, as if he wanted to destroy us. I spoke to him very gently, but he only laughs at me. I will not go on living if you do not punish him!"

Iván Tsarévich was drowsy, and very angry with Katomá, and said to the king's daughter: "Do with him as you will."

So the king's daughter at once made her servants cut off Katomá's legs. He submitted to his torturers and thought: "If I must suffer, still the Tsarévich will soon learn something of what trouble is."

His two legs were cut off: the Tsarévna looked round and noticed a lofty stump at the edge of the road. She bade her servants set Katomá on it. And as to the Tsarévich, she tied him to a rope behind the carriage, and so returned to her own kingdom. Katomá sat on his tree stem and wept bitter tears.

"Farewell, Iván Tsarévich: forget me not!"

Iván Tsarévich had to leap behind the carriage, and knew very well that he had made a mistake, but it could not be cured.

When Anna the Fair had again reached her kingdom the Tsarévich had to mind the cows. Every morning he drove them into the open field, and every evening drove them back into the royal courtyard; and the Tsarévna sat on the balcony and saw that none of the cows was missing. Iván Tsarévich had to count the cows and to stable them all, and to give the last one a

kiss under its tail. The cow knew what was expected of her, and remained standing at the door and lifted her tail up.

Katomá all day long sat on his tree-stump without meat or drink, but could not descend, and he thought: "I must die of hunger." But near by there was a thick forest, and there a knight lived who was blind but very strong. This knight used to scent the animals which ran by, run after them and catch them, not minding whether it were a rabbit, or fox, or a bear. He could roast them for lunch. And he could run so fast, faster than any animal that leaps. One day a fox came by, and the knight heard him and ran after him. The fox ran up to the tree on which Katomá sat, and turned round there. In his haste the blind man struck the tree so hard with his forehead that it fell out with its roots. Katomá tumbled down and asked: "Who are you?"

"I am the blind knight, and for three years I have lived in the wood, feeding myself on the animals I can catch and bake on my fire; otherwise I should have died of hunger."

"Were you blind from birth?"

"No; Anna the Fair put my eyes out."

"Brother!" said Katomá, "she also cut off my legs, both of them."

So the two knights decided they would live together and aid each other.

The blind man said to Katomá, "Sit on my back and show me the way: I will serve you with my feet and you me with your eyes." The blind man lifted Katomá up, and the legless man cried out, "Left; right; straight on!" So for a long while they lived in the wood and used to catch rabbits, foxes and bears for their food.

One day Katomá said: "Why should we live alone here? I am told that there is in the town a rich mer-

chant and his daughter. She, they say, is indescribably kind towards the poor men and cripples, and gives them alms with her own hands. Brother, we must carry her off. She shall live with us as the mistress of the house."

So the blind man took a barrow, put the legless knight into it, and ran him into the town, up to the merchant's house. When the daughter looked out of the window she instantly rushed out in order to give them alms. She came to Katomá and said, "Take this as God's blessing!"

He accepted her gift and laid hold of her hand, dragged her into the barrow, and cried out to the blind man, who ran away so fast, faster than any horses could overtake him. It was all in vain for the merchant to try to overtake the two knights. The knights brought the merchant's daughter to their *izbá*[1] in the wood and said: "Stay with us as our sister, and become the mistress of the house. We poor folk have no one to cook our food or to do the washing. God will not desert you therefor."

So the merchant's daughter remained with them, and the two knights honoured and loved her as though she were their own sister. Sometimes they went a-hunting, and then the sister remained alone in the house looking after the domestic service, cooking the food and doing the washing. But one day Bába Yagá with the bony legs came into the hut and sucked the blood out of the fair maiden's breast. And whenever the two knights went away on the chase, Bába Yagá came back, so that very soon the merchant's fair daughter became thin and feeble. But the blind man did not notice: only Katomá noticed that something had gone wrong, so he told his companion, and both asked their sister what was the cause.

Bába Yagá had forbidden her to tell them anything about it; she was therefore much too frightened for a

[1] Hut.

long time to tell them what was her trouble. But at last they persuaded her, and she told them: "Every time when you go out on the chase an ancient hag comes into the hut. She has an evil face and long grey hairs. She hangs her head down over me and sucks my white breast."

"Oh," said the blind man, "that is the Bába Yagá! Wait a little bit. We must deal with her in her own fashion. To-morrow we must not go hunting: we will try to catch her in the house and to capture her."

Next morning both of them went out. "Creep under the bench," said the blind man to Katomá, and sit still. I will go into the courtyard, and wait under the window. And you, Sister, sit down. If Bába Yagá comes, whilst you are combing her hair weave a part of her hair and hang the knot on to the window. I will then seize her by her grey tresses." It was said and done. The blind man seized Bába Yagá by her grey tresses, and cried out, "Ho, Katomá! come out and hold the evil hag till I get into the hut."

Bába Yagá heard it, and she wanted to lift her head and leap away, but she was unable. She tore and grumbled, but it was no good. Katomá crept out from the bank and turned round on her, threw himself on her like a mountain of iron. He strangled her until the heavens appeared to her as small as a sheepskin.

The blind man sprang out of the hut and said: "We must build a big faggot-heap and burn the old hag and scatter her ashes to the four winds."

Bába Yagá besought them: "Father, doveling, forgive me. Whatever you will I will do!"

"Very well, ancient witch," said the knights, "show us the well with the waters of Life and Death."

"If you will only not lay me low, I will show it you."

Then Katomá mounted the blind man's back and he

took Bába Yagá by her hair. So they fared into the deepest part of the slumberous forest, and she there showed them a well and said: "This is the healing water that renders life."

"Take care, Katomá, do not make a mistake. If she deceives us this time we may not be able to repair it all our life long."

So Katomá broke off a twig. It had hardly fallen into the water before it flamed up.

"Ah! that was a further deceit of yours!"

So the two knights made ready to throw Bába Yagá into the fiery brook. But she still prayed for mercy as before, and swore a great oath she would not deceive any more.

"Really and truly I will show you the right water!"

So the two knights were ready once more to adventure it, and Bába Yagá took them to another well. Katomá broke off a dry twig from the tree and threw it into the well. The twig had hardly fallen into the water before it sprouted up and became green and blue. "This water is right," said Katomá, so the blind man washed his eyes and could at once see. And he put the cripple into the water, and his legs grew on to him.

Then they were both very glad, and said, "Now we are healthy, we will again talk of our own rights; but we must first settle our account with Bába Yagá. If we now forgive her, we shall get no good thereby, for she will strive ever against us all her life." So they took her back to the fiery brook and threw her into it, and she was burned to death.

Katomá then married the merchant's daughter, and all three went back into the kingdom of Anna Tsarévna the Fair to free Iván Tsarévich. They went into the capital, and there he met them with his herd of cows.

"Stay, herd," said Katomá, "whither are you driving the cattle?"

"Into the Queen's courtyard; the Tsarévna counts them every day to see whether all the cows have come home."

"Herd, put on my clothes; I will put on yours and will drive the cows home."

"No, brother, that will never do. Should the Tsarévna notice it, I should suffer."

"Fear nothing; nothing will happen, you will come by no harm; Katomá is your surety."

Iván sighed: "O good man! if only he were here I should not be herding cows."

Then Katomá showed himself who he was, and the Tsarévich embraced him tenderly and wept bitterly. "I never expected I should see you any more!"

So they changed clothes, and Katomá drove the cows into the royal courtyard. Anna Tsarévna came out on to her balcony and counted the cattle. Then she commanded to take them all into the stable. All the cows went into the stable: only the last stayed behind and raised her tail. Katomá sprang up at her and cried out, "Wretched animal! why are you stopping here?" So he gripped and snatched the tail so mightily that the entire skin remained in his hand.

When Anna Tsarévna saw this she cried out aloud, "What is that wretched herdsman doing? Lay hold of him and bring him to me."

So the attendants laid hold on Katomá and dragged him into the castle. Katomá suffered it without resistence and relied on his strength.

He was taken up to the Tsarévna, who looked at him and said, "Who are you?"

"I am Katomá, whose legs you once cut off and then set on a tree trunk."

Then the Tsarévna thought, "If he can get his legs back, I can do no more against him." And she asked for forgiveness from him and the Tsarévich. She repented

of her sins and swore an oath that she would ever love Iván Tsarévich and obey him in all things.

Iván Tsarévich forgave her, and forthwith they lived in peace and unison. The knight who was once blind stayed by them. But Katomá went away with his wife to the rich merchant and abode in his house.

A CURE FOR STORY-TELLING

THERE was once a porter in the world: he had a wife who was passionately fond of stories, and she would only let people come and visit her who could tell stories. Well, as you may understand, this was rather costly to the husband. So he began to think, "How can I cure her of this undesirable habit?"

Well, one day in the winter, late at night, an old man came in frozen to atoms, and he asked to be allowed to stop the night. So the husband ran out to him and said, "Can you tell tales?"

Then the peasant saw that there was no help for it, as he was simply freezing with cold, and said, "I have an idea: will you tell stories for a long time?"

"Yes, all night long."

"Capital: come in!"

So he led the guest in.

Then the husband said, "Now, my wife, here is a peasant who has promised to tell stories all night long, on the condition that you are not to make any remarks or interruptions."

"Yes," said the guest; "no remarks, or else I shall not open my mouth."

So they had supper and lay down to sleep, and the peasant began—

"There was an owl flying across a garden, and it sat over a well and sipped the water.

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And he went on telling the same thing over and over again—

"There was an owl flying across a garden, and it sat over a well and sipped the water."

So the mistress went on listening, and at last interrupted: "What sort of a tale is this? Why, it is a mere repetition."

"Why do you interrupt me? I told you you must not make any exclamations: this is the preface of the tale, and there comes another after it."

Then the man, after hearing this, could not help leaping up from the bench and whipping his wife.

"You were told not to make any interruptions, and you will not let him end his story."

So he set on beating, beating, whipping, slippering, basting her, until the wife at the end hated stories, and was in despair ever afterwards at the sound of them.

NOTES

Alyósha Popóvich. One of the great knights at the court of Prince Vladímir. He was an effeminate kind of person and perhaps one who rather incited others to effort by his jibes than by his prowess. He is always given the uncomplimentary *soubriquet* of the 'Mocker of Women.' His principal heroic episode is told in the prose ballad in this book entitled 'Alyósha Popóvich.'

Angey, Tsar. Filuyán is a fabulous city found in the cantations and mystical rites of the Russian peasants. It is, however, probably derived from the Greek Θύλη.

Bába Yagá. In Professor Sypherd's studies on Chaucer's *House of Fame*, Chaucer Society, 1904, a most valuable note will be found on revolving houses. It will be seen that the legend is cognate with magic wheels that revolve at great speed, or turn on wheels emitting flame and poison. The nearest analogy quoted is the whirling rampart in the *Mael Duinn*, but the Russian legend is evidently related and not derived.

Bogatýr. The *bogatýr* is the Russian Knight, but is absolutely unlike any Western romantic notion. He is a person of magical power and gigantic stature and prowess. Some of the *bogatyri* are decidedly demi-gods; others more decisively human; but they all have some superhuman, it may be said inhuman, touch. The derivation of the word has been very much in dispute. The characteristic thing to note is that the word is only found in Russian, and in no other Slavonic language, and is almost certainly of Tatar origin, the original form being something like *Bagadur*. The Sanskrit derivation which is attempted of *Baghadharà* seems scarcely probable. Goryáyev's dictionary states that the original meaning was a company-commander of the Tatars.

If so, *bogatýr* is probably a corruption (though *bog* God and *bogat* rich) of the form *buĭtur*, found in the Slóvo, which is certainly cognate with the Turanian root *buĭ*, to command. *v.* notes in my edition of Igor.

Bryánsk. Bryánsk in the Province of Orĕl contains wonderful woods which were in ancient times impenetrable, and became the legendary home of magic, and of weird happenings. The Aspen tree is always associated in Russian folk-lore with magic and wizardry; it is also said that Judas hanged himself on this tree.

Chernígov. An ancient city of Russia on the Dniepr, a little higher up than Kíev.

Christ. As, in German folk-lore, the legends of Christ walking the earth with His disciples are very frequent and characteristic. There is a touch of friendly familiarity in this presentation which does not involve the least irreverence, but adds a touch of sarcastic humour which the Germans lack.

The Brother of Christ. For the punishment of the old man who grumbled at the good things of earth there is a surprisingly close analogy in Dante's *Inferno*, canto vii.

" Fitti nel limo dicon; Tristi fummo
Nell' aer dolce che dal sol s'allegra,
Portando dentro accidioso fummo:
Or c' attristiam nella belletta negra."

" Sunk in the slime they utter: 'Loth were we,
In sweet air sullen, which the sun makes glad,
Our souls besmirched with dull reluctancy:
Now in this black morass, our hearts are sad.'"

Chufil-Filyushka. Both these names are adaptations of the Greek θεόφιλος.

THE CRYSTAL APPLE AND THE SILVER SAUCER

There is a strong Celtic flavour about this episode. Cf. The Twa Sisters o' Binnorie.

Ho's ta'en three locks o' her yellow hair
(Binnorie, oh Binnorie),
And wi' them strung his harp sae rare
By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

And sune the harp sang loud and clear
(Binnorie, oh Binnorie),
Fareweel my father, and mother dear!
By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

And then, as plain as plain could be,
(Binnorie, oh Binnorie),
There sits my sister wha drowned me!
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

In this story the Russian of the words sung by the piper is also in Russian ballad metre.

Danílo the Unfortunate. This is a prose version of a ballad and contains a very full account of this legend. The old hag whom Danílo meets on the way is elsewhere called the Wise Woman of Kíev, an old witch with the ugly qualities generally assigned.

Death. Death is feminine in Russian and occurs all through the folk-lore as the visible figure of a skeleton whom they met by the way on the roadsides, and who may be cheated of her prey or dealt with like any other demon.

Dobrýnya Nikítich. One of the great figures at the legendary court of Prince Vladímir. He was a dragon-slayer, but his principal employment was as ambassador.

The Dream. Notes

The *izbá*, or hut, always has a *dvor* or courtyard, access to which is gained through double gates as well as through a postern. Often the hut is raised by a flight of steps from the level of the courtyard.

The *izbá* may have a cooling room in which to rest, so as to avoid the sudden change of air from the heated inner room; it is also a living room in the summer. Outside the *dvor* against the fence there is a bench (*lávka*), on which the family sits in the summer. The hut is made of logs, the fence of boards.

Between the rafters and the sloped roof is the loft (*cherdák*), into which a ladder leads.

Inside the hut is that essential and central feature of Russian peasant life, the stove, which occupies one side of a wall. In front against it three long implements stand, the poker, broom and shovel. The oven rests on a brick or tile foundation, about eighteen inches high, with a semicircular hollow space below. The top of the stove is used for a sleeping bench (*poláty*) for the old folk or the honoured guest. In larger houses there may be a *lezhán'ka* or heating stove, used as a sleeping sofa.

The bath-house is separate from the hut, and contains a flight of steps for different degrees of heat, obtained from white-hot stones on which water is flung. This is only found in better-class houses. In villages there is a general bath-house to which the peasants go once a week.

Every corner in the *izbá* has its particular name. There is the *great corner*, where the Ikon stands, the *upper corner* near the door, and the *stove corner* opposite to the doors of the stove.

The fence is made of boards or sticks or stumps.

Long thin laths are stuck on to an iron spike, and lit; a pail of water is placed below into which the cinders fall; these lamps must be renewed as they burn down, and the charred ends swept up.

Up to very recent times, patriarchal usages obtained through Russia, and married sons resided in the father's house.

This particular story portrays some of the personifications and allegorizings of the common acts of life; all of which have their appropriate blessing or grace. There are a number of tales of

the curse attendant on the neglect of these duties, e.g. *The Devil in the Dough-pan.*

An example of the invocations is given in a note to *The Midnight Dance.*

Duke. i.e. a translation of *voyevodá*, which is again a translation of the High-German *Herzog*, which again is derived from the Latin *Dux*, meaning the leader of an army, not a mere title.

Egóri Khrábry. Egori the Brave. Is the Russian counterpart for St. George the Dragon-slayer.

Elijah the Prophet and St. Nicholas. Perún was the God of Thunder in pagan Slavdom, and his attributes have been transferred to Elijah who is represented as driven up to Heaven in a fiery chariot darting fiery rays, drawn by four winged horses, and surrounded by clouds and flames; a tale which copied the biblical account of Elijah's end. On earth the noise of the wheels is called thunder. In Nóvgorod there were one or two churches to St. Elijah of the Drought, and St. Elijah of the Rain, to be consulted as occasion required. The name days of these saints are December 6th and July 20th.

Hawk. The hawk is one of the most common references in Russian folk-lore, and the reference to the clear-eyed hawk is one of the strongest metaphors. The crow is equally common, but is generally used as a malign being. In Russian folk-tale there is nothing incongruous in a man having as his sons a boy, a crow and a hawk or an eagle: or as in '*Márya Morévna*,' where the marriage of Ivan with a beautiful princess and of his two sisters with the eagle and the crow are all of them equally plausible.

Ídolishche. One of the symbols of paganism in the early ballads of Russia. He is generally represented as a gluttonous monster; but in the ballad of the Realms of Copper, Silver, and Gold his name has been given too as a goblin. Goblins are very rare in Russian folk-lore; fairies seem to be non-existent.

Ilyá Múromets. Ilyá Múromets is one of the heroes of the Kíev cycle; he derives his strength from mystical sources of Mother Earth, and his great feat is the slaying of the Nightingale Robber. He is intermediate between the '*elder bogatyri*,' the earth-born Tirans, and the human champions of the legendary Court of Vladímir. He is always of popular origin and, as such, at variance with the semi-Scandinavian Court.

Iván Vasíl'evich. The Tsar Iván Vasíl'evich is a very popular figure in the Russian ballads; there are two of this name: Ivan III. 1462–1505, and Ivan the Terrible, 1533–1584. Both were very energetic rulers who enlarged the domain of Moscow and curbed the power of the territorial nobility.

Midnight Dance. General Notes to this Story

The underworld is the home of magic. This charm, to be said by a soldier going to the wars, may be of interest.

"Beneath the sea, the sea of Khvalýnsk [the Caspian], there stands a house of bronze, and in that house of bronze the fiery serpent is enchained, and under the fiery serpent lies the seven *pud* key from the castle of the Prince, the Prince Vladímir, and in the princely castle, the castle of Vladímir, are laid the knightly trappings of the knights of Nóvgorod, of the youthful war-men.

"On the broad Volga, on the steep-set banks, the princely swan swims from the Prince's courtyard. I will capture that swan, I will seize it, I will grasp it. (I will say) 'Thou, oh swan, fly to the sea of Khvalýnsk, peck the fiery snake to death, gain the seven *pud* key, the key from the earth of Prince Vladímir.' In my power it is not to fly to the sea of Khvalýnsk; in my power it is not to peck to death the fiery snake; nor with my legs may I reach the seven *pud* key. There is on the sea, on the ocean, on the island of Buyán, the eldest brother of all the crows, and he will fly to the sea of Khvalýnsk, he will peck to death the fiery snake, he will gain the seven *pud* key; but the crow is held back by the evil witch of Kíev. In the standing wood, in the grey-clad forest, stands a little hut, not thatched, not wattled; and, in the little hut, lies the evil witch of Kíev. I will go to the standing forest, the dreamy wood, I will enter in at the hut of the evil witch of Kíev.

"Thou, oh evil witch of Kíev, bid thy crow fly over the sea of Khvalýnsk, to the house of bronze; bid him peck the fiery snake, bid him gain the seven *pud* key. She was grim, and she clove to her crow, the evil witch of Kíev. In my old age I cannot roam to the sea, to the ocean, to the isle of Buyán, to the Black Crow. Do thou bid, by my enchanting words, the crow gain me the seven *pud* key.

"The crow has smitten the house of bronze, has pecked the fiery snake to death, has gained the seven *pud* key.

"With that key I will unlock the princely castle, the castle of Vladímir, I will gain the knightly gear, the trappings of the knights of Nóvgorod, of the youthful war-men; and in that gear the arquebus cannot fell me, the shots cannot hit me, the warriors and champions, the hosts of Tatary and Kazán cannot hurt me.

"I invoke the servant, a man, a fighter, in the host, who goeth to war with these my potent words.

"My words die down,
My deeds they crown."

[Kazán was the last stronghold of the Tatars. It was stormed in 1549.]

Buyán is a kind of fairy hill like the *Tír n'an óg* of the Irish folk-tales, the land of youth, and cannot probably be assigned to any physical geography. Most probably the mythical Isle of Buyán is the reminiscence of the Isle of Rügen. The whole of the Pomeranian coast from Lübeck to the Memel was, prior to its conquest by the Saxons and the Brandenburgers, a Slavonic district, and the Isle of Rügen, in especial, the promontory of Arcona, a seat of the most highly developed Slavonic pagan ritual: Saxo Grammaticus has conserved us full details. Considering the intimate association of the mysterious stone *Alátyr* (probably meaning amber) with Buyán: and the fact that *Buyán* is a Slav translation of the Old Slav name Ruyán, the wind-swept isle [cf. English *rough*, German *rauh*, etc.]; also taken the specific references in the magic charms in connection with the facts recorded by the Scandinavian chroniclers, there seems to be little doubt that the Isle of Buyán is a folk-tale shadow of the old place

of Pagan pilgrimage, contaminated, of course, with other fantastic elements.

Katomá. This is one of the marvellous servants whom fortunate princes possess in folk-lore. In Russian folk-tales they have magical attributes, and are often described by their caps, e.g. oaken-cap, blue-cap, etc.

Koshchéy the Deathless. The meaning of this name is very hard to determine. There are at least three disparate ideas involved. First of all the most ancient is that which occurs in the Word of Igor's Armament, in which the word Koshchéy is used for a warrior of the hostile Pólovtsy; and, when Ígor is said to be put on a Koshchéy saddle, it means he is taken into captivity. Hence the word *koshchéy* came to be used in Russian as meaning a slave, or a groom, originally a captive slave from the Pólovtsy who fought the Russians for over two hundred years. Consequently the word has a meaning in Russian folk-lore which has a widespread Aryan notion, that of a fearful Enchanter who lives in a mountain fastness far removed; runs away with the beautiful princess, and can only be slain by the valiant lover, going through unfordable streams, impenetrable forests and unpassable mountains, so as to catch hold of his soul which is contained in a casket, or in some other manner is always terribly enclosed. He takes this soul, which is as a rule lastly contained in an egg, up to the Monster's palace, scrunches it in his hand, and the monster dies. Thirdly, the word became confused with *kost'*, bone, and so came to mean a skeleton or miser, and a wandering Jew. The epithet 'deathless' does not mean indestructible, but that he can only be slain in an extraordinary manner and will not die in a natural way.

Kutúzovo. The Kutúzovy are one of the most ancient of Russian families; this particular village from which they derive their name must be somewhere on the trade route of the Dniepr.

Kvas. A liquid made from various kinds of flour and fermented with sour milk to which is added malt or yeast.

Name-day. The day of the patron Saint. In Russia Saints' days are kept in place of birthdays.

Na-úm. In this Russian name the two vowels are to be sounded separately, *Na-úm.*

Nightingale Robber. His patronymics are Rakhmánovich, Odikhmantovich, Rakhmánya, all of them very difficult of definition or explanation.

Nightingale Robber. Ilyá Múromet's conquest of the Nightingale Robber is his most notable feat. He is a very difficult figure to explain. He is a gigantic bird who has been explained on the one hand as a highway robber who was a great bard, for the Russian *solovéy* (nightingale) is applied to a minstrel. But it is more probable that there is a confusion of two other words in this one, and that the word *solovéy*, which has come to mean nightingale, is either derived from *sláva*, meaning fame, or from the same root as the hostile power whom Ilyá Múromets, in some of the ballads, fights, namely Solóvnik the Grey One. Be this as it may, the version which has come down is that the Nightingale Robber was an enormous bird, whose nest spread over seven oaks, who had needed no other weapon than his dreadful beast-like, lion-like, or dragon-like whistle on which every wall and every beast and every man fell down in sheer terror. The rest of this story may be gathered from the one which has been selected for this book.

The Pike. The pike plays a peculiar part in Russian folk-lore.

Potán'ka. The name of Potán'ka [in which the 'n' and 'k' are to be sounded separately as in pincase], is also found in the Nóvgorod ballads where Potán'ka the Lame is one of the boon companions of Vasíli Busláyevich.

Prískazka. Many of the tales begin with a conventional introduction which has no relation to the story. Such an instance may be found in 'The Wolf and the Tailor.' Also in 'A Cure for Story-telling.' And the tale of 'The Dun Cow,' 'Princess to be Kissed at a Charge,' etc.

The Realm of Stone. For the episodes in this story of the kingdom turned to stone there seems strong evidence of adaptation or loan from the Arabian Nights. Cf. The Tale of the Young King of the Black Islands, and the Tale of the City of Brass, but the development is very different.

Sebezh. A city in the Vitebsk Province bordering on Poland.

Shemyák. The judge. Shemyákin Sud, the court of Shemyák, is a proverbial expression for arbitrary judgments. He was a prince of Galicia of the time of Vasíli II, 1425–62. He was also a leader of the unruly nobles of that time. This may be partly the reason that the name of the family has been given this unfortunate significance.

The Shovel. Shovels are used to insert loaves and pots deep into the Russian stove, for which use see the long note on the 'Dream.'

The Sister of the Sun. The Russian commentator in the compilation, from which these stories are drawn, states that this is the expression for the dawn.

Sorrow. This picture of Sorrow as an ancient hag who pursues mankind throughout life is peculiarly Russian and is the theme of very many beautiful ballads. She is described as a lovely beggar woman, with a pale face, low stature, and hare's blood in her veins, and her cheeks of poppy red, and she entices men to drink their sorrow away in the public-houses, and is frequently turned into a moral lesson against over-indulgence. But this particular application of the myth, the picture of her as a wandering devil who attaches herself to unfortunate heroes but can be cheated into non-existence, much like the ordinary devil of folk-lore, is a feature, as has been said, probably peculiar to Russia.

St. Nicholas. In Russia St. Nicholas is the most popular iracle worker amongst all the saints. In the story of St. Nicholas and St. Elias his beneficent character is clearly shown.

In the story of St. Nicholas the Wonder Worker, I have taken

the story as I found it, and have not attempted to fill up the obvious gaps.

The Sun, and how it was made by Divine Will. This story is of literary and ancient origin; the language is very antique.

Svyatogór. Svyatogór in this story may be eponymous of geography. The word standing for *svyátyya góry*, the sacred mountains. Múrom is an ancient Russian settlement in the province of Vladímir, by the river Oka, and the village of Karacharovo is not far off.

As to Svyatogór's bride, there is another story which tells how he acquired her. One day Svyatogór was walking on the earth and laid hold of a wallet which an old man whom he met wandering by held. He could not lift it however, for it was rooted in the earth. He went on from there to a smith, something like Wayland Smith (the whole tale has a curious Norse tang), who forged his fortune, told him he would have to go to the Kingdom by the Sea, and there he would find his wife who for thirty years had been lying in the dung. He proceeds to the Kingdom by the Sea, finds the miserable hut, enters it, and sees the maiden lying in the dung. And her body was as dark as a pine. So Svyatogór purchases her freedom by taking out five hundred roubles, laying it on the table, and then snatching up his sharp sword out of his sheath smote her on her white breasts and so left her. Then the maiden woke up, and the skin of age-long filth had been broken; she went and traded with the five hundred roubles, came to the Holy Mountains, and presented herself there in all her maiden beauty. Svyatogór the Knight also came to look on her, fell in love and wooed her for his wife. He then recognised her by the scar on her white breasts.

The Swan Maiden. This is one of the most baffling figures in Russian mythology. She corresponds to the Siren of Greece, and the Lorelei of Germany, but is very distinct in all her characteristics. She is also called in the Russian Devítsa (maiden), which may be a corruption of Dívitsa, the feminine of *Div*, one of the ancient pagan deities of Russia. Like the Lorelei, she is said to sit on the rocks and draw sailors down into the depths, but her more human characteristics are stated in this story.

Thoughtless Word. The devil in this story is the popular myth of the water-gods or sprites, elsewhere called the *vodyanóy* or *vódyánik*. The point of detail, that after the rescue of the maiden the boy has to walk backwards until he reaches the high road, is rather similar to the Celtic notion of Widdershins, the superstition that anyone who walked round the churchyard contrary to the direction of the sun would be captured by the fairies.

Túgarin Zmyéyevich. Túgarin Zmyéyevich, the strong man, the Serpent's Son.

Vazúza and Vólga. Similar stories are told of other rivers. The old Russian ballads give names and patronymics to their rivers such as the people use for themselves, e.g. Dněpr Slovútich Don Iványch.

The Vazúza is a short stream crossing the borders of the provinces of Tver and Smolensk, meeting a great bend of the Vólga at Zubtsóv (in the province of Tver).

The Sea of Khvalýnsk is the Caspian, so called from an ancient people (the Khvalísi) of the eleventh and tenth centuries, who lived at the mouth of the Vólga in the Caspian. There is also a town called Khvalýnsk on the Vólga in the province of Sarátov, above the city of Sarátov.

This particular story is probably a poetization of a geographical fact, but in all the Russian folk-lore the river-gods play a very great part. Thus Igor in The Word of Igor's Armament, on the occasion of his defeat, has a very beautiful colloquy with the Donéts. At least two of the heroes of the ballad cycle, Don Ivánovich and Sukhán Odikhmántevich, are in some aspects direct personifications of the rivers, whilst the river-gods exercise a direct and vital influence over the fortunes of several others, such as Vasíli Buslávich and Dobrýnya Nikítich.

Many Russian rivers have been rendered almost into human characters. The ordinary speech is still of Mother Vólga. In the Nóvgorod ballads there is a mention of Father Volkhov, much as we speak of Father Thames, and there were very great possibilities of the development of a river mythology which did not succeed. It is worth observing that in one ballad dealing with Vasíli Buslávich, the hero of Nóvgorod, this semi-comic figure is

twitted by the men of Nóvgorod that he will one day turn the Volkhov into *Kvas* (q.v.): i.e. he will one day set the Thames on fire. [Rybnikov, I, 336].

The Wood-Sprite. Léshi is a peculiar feature in Russian folk-lore. He is somewhat similar to Pan, but is also represented as having copper arms, and an iron body, terms which refer to colour rather than to material. Sometimes he has claws for hands.

Yagá Búra. This is the same as Bába Yagá, but is specific reference to the Witch who raises the Wind.

GLOSSARY

Aspen. Always associated with magic. Its trembling leaves give it a weird appearance.

Bába Yagá. Russian witch, also Yagá Búra.

Bábushka. The grandmother.

Bárkhat. This word also means velvet.

Bátyushka. Father in a general sense, meaning anybody older. *Otéts* is father, meaning the relationship of father and son.

Birds' milk. The Russian folk-tale expression for asking for the moon.

Boyárs. This may be translated earls, but in the Russian social scale it only meant the bigger men, the seigneurs.

Boyárynyi. Countesses, feminine plural of *boyár.*

Chúdo-Yúda. The Old Man of the Sea. This is a very clear loan from the Homeric Proteus.

Dyádka. Uncle. A term of respect.

Egórushko Zalyót. Means George the Bold Flier.

Fatá. A long silken glove.

Gúsli. A musical instrument, something like a zither with seven strings.

Iváshko Zapéchnik. Iván, who is always sitting behind the stove.

Iváshechko. A diminutive form of Iván.

Iváshko. A diminutive form of Iván.

Izbá. Hut.

Kaftán. A peasant's overcoat, made very long.

Khvalýnsk. The old name of the Caspian. *Vide* Vazúza and Vólga.

Korolévich. King's son. Koról, king.

Korolévna. King's wife.

Ksálavy. Mythical birds, the meaning of which is entirely unknown.

Mikháilo Ivánovich. The popular name for the bear.

Mísha Kosolápy. Dmítri, the Bandylegged.

Morévna. Of the sea.

Nikíta. From the Greek Νικήτης, conquer.

Pope. Village priest.

Pud. A Russian weight. Thirty-six pounds avoirdupois.

Sarafán. A short sleeveless jacket, generally embroidered, worn over the bodice or the blouse.

Sazhén. A length of seven feet.

Sebézh. A city in the Vítebsk province, bordering on Poland. The Poles and the Mussulmen are all called infidels, Saracens or *Busormany.*

Shúba. A fur mantle.

Stárosta. Mayor of a town.

Teléga. A peasant's cart without springs.

Tsarévich. Tsar's son.

Tyátya. Daddy.

Tzarévna. Tsar's wife.

Ukaz. Imperial edict.

Ványa. A diminutive form of Iván.

Vertodúb. The oak-turner, a gigantic figure.

Vertogór. The mountain-turner; a gigantic figure.

Vóron Vóronovich. Crow Crowson.

Zamorýshek. This name is freely translated Benjamin, the last-born son of an old man.

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A.D. 1185

A RUSSIAN HISTORICAL EPIC

Edited and Translated for the Philological Society by

LEONARD A. MAGNUS, LL.B.

Editor of "Respublica" (Early English Text Society), "Russian Folk-Tales," etc.

With Revised Russian Text, Translation, Introduction, Historical Map, Genealogical Tables, Notes, Glossary, and full Critical Apparatus

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PREFACE

This is the first English edition of this ancient Russian epic.

It is intended as a handbook to the increasing number of students of the Russian language, and to reveal to the general public one of the treasures of Russian medieval literature.

The Editor has to express his gratitude to many friends, without whose encouragement and advice it could never have appeared, and in especial to Miss J. CURRIE, who has drawn the map, as well as to Professor A. P. GOUDY for his illuminative suggestions.

L. A. M.

X. Плачъ Ярóславнынъ.

(1) *Вопилы*[270] поютъ на Дýнаи;
Ярóславна[n] имъ[280] гласъ слышить,
зегзицею незнаемъ[281]ⁿ рано кычеть:[n]—
„Полечю", рече, „зегзицею по Дýнаеви;
Омочю[n] бебрянъ[n] рукавъ въ Каялѣ [рѣцѣ];
утрý[n] князю кровавыя[n] его раны
на жестоцѣмъ[n] его тѣлѣ".

(2) Ярóславна рано плачеть[n]
въ Путивлѣ[n] на забралѣ, аркучи:[n]—
„О вѣ́тре, вѣ́трило,
чему, господи́не,[283]
насильно вѣешн?
Чему мычеши[n] хиновьскыя[n] стрѣлкы
на своею нетрудною крилцю
на моея лады[n] вой?

[271] в ЕС. [272] друзѣ ПЕС. [272a] Боянъ ПЕС. [273] пръв- П. [274] горазду ПЕС. [275] пръв- П. [276] нелзѣ ЕС. [277] Кіевьскимъ ЕС. [278] нъ рози нося имъ хоботы ПЕС. [279] Копіа ПЕС. [280] Ярославнынъ П; -нымъ ЕС. [281] незраемь ПЕС. [282] -ѣ ПЕ. [283] гне ЕС.

SPECIMEN OF NOTES

745. *рекъ Боянъ* etc. One of the most corrupt passages. These have been some of the suggestions:—

(1) *Abicht* transpose *на*. But находы can only mean *finds* not expeditions.
(2) *Abicht* read пѣ створца sang of the hero or actor.
(3) ходы emended to гордыни pride: or *ходины* seasons.
(4) *Dubenski* and others read исходы.

My reading is based on some of the conjectures. Certainly, transposition is essential.

The sense is: Boyán related the wars of Svyatosláv I against the the Kagan (or Kogan) of the Khozars: this Svyatosláv was killed in a fight against the Pecenegs and his skull used by the enemy as a drinking vessel. Hence *кромѣ* not *безъ плечю*, out side the shoulders. In l. 753 the poet of the Слово reapplies this quotation to Russia without Ígoŕ. Boyán not only sang of these *первыя времена* but also of those (старое время) and Yaroslav I [v. notes under these headings], and of Olég of Tmutarakáń, the ancestor of Ígor.

I restore *азъ* to supply the sense in line 747. *з* often lapses before *ст* in the MS of the Слово.

Thus Boyán's minstrelsy extended back to the glories of the first ages of Troyán (Rurik and his grand-children). It is observable that Ólga the wife of Ígoŕ (the son of Rurik † 945) laments him in these terms [cf. *не крьсити*] уже мнѣ мужа своего не крѣсити.

X. THE LAMENT OF YAROSLÁVNA.

(1) The mourners sing on the Danube.

Yaroslávna hears their voice; she moans early like a cuckoo in the unknown land:—"I will fly" she spoke,—"like a cuckoo along the Danube; I will wet my beaver sleeves in the Kayála river, I will wipe away for the prince his bloody wounds on his stricken body.

(2) THE INCANTATION OF THE WIND.

Yaroslávna wails early at Putívl' on the rampart, saying:—"Oh Wind, little Wind, wherefore, Master, blowest thou with violence? Wherefore hurlest thou with thy tireless wing torturing arrows on the hosts of my love?

SPECIMEN OF NOTES

432. *съ Могуты* etc. It has always been supposed these are tribes under the dominion of Yarosláv of Galicia. Their names are mostly unrecorded.

I. *Могута, могота* abstract collective noun; forces (мочь *posse*).

II. *Татраны.* Татранинъ clearly a man from the Tátra, the highest peaks in the Carpathians.

III. *Шельбиры.* I cannot trace this name. The termination бир быр points to a Turkish origin. Vyázemski cites a Polish word Szálbierz meaning rogue, and in the government of Írkutsk a verb ошальберить meaning to strike.

Melioránski cites a Kalmyc word *Šilbȳr*, a long whip. However, Шельбиринъ must be congener with the remainder of the series.

IV. *Топчаки.* This word has an unmistakeable Turanian form: cf. Cumanian *toprak* corn; or [Меліоранскій] a certain sort of horse (*topčak*). But I suggest identifying them with the inhabitants of Topczewo a village in the province of Grodno, 20 verst from Bielsk, or Topczykały a village seven miles from Grodno.

V. *Ревуги.* E. and C. read несъ not и съ. But this is probably a slip for и съ. Ревугъ looks like *Rewuca* in the Slovak country in the county of Gömör (Hungary) on the South side of the Tátra mountains. In German this place is called Rauschenbach [cf. ревѣть, ревутъ roar]; there is also a Rewucza in the county of Liptau..

Mongols, during their sway of two hundred years never attained to this much of civilization, nor ever took to building cities.

In the VIII century under the influence of Jewish and Arabic immigrants the dynasty of the Kagans, (the despots of the Khozars) became converts to Judaism. The Khozar capital, called Itil, was on the lower Volga, and grew into commercial importance.

This subjection of the Slavs to the Khozars was not altogether disadvantageous; the road was open for exchange between the Caspian and the Black Sea, the Dněpr and the Volkhov with the Volga.

This transitory Empire of the Khozars enabled cities to spring up in Slav Russia; such as Kíev, Černígov, Smolénsk, Lyúbeč and Nóvgorod. The principal and all-important commercial highway was from Lake Ilmen, the Dněpr, the tributaries of which linked up this Eastern Empire with the waters of the Dněstr and the Vistula. This waterway from the Dněpr to the Black Sea is what the old Russian Chronicles call the "road from the Varangians to the Greeks."

However, towards the beginning of the ninth century this empire was decaying, and the Vikings of Scandinavia were making their appearance. A new epoch begins, and Russia, under Northern pressure, is to emerge as a nation.

§4. THE NORSE INVASION.

The cataclasmic eruption from Scandinavia, which remodelled so much of Europe from England to Sicily, transformed the face of the Russian land. As in England, in France, in Italy and in the Eastern Empire these alien elements were quickly absorbed into the native population; they were few, but they established dynasties. In Western Europe the Northmen founded chivalry; they came as buccaneers, and stayed to virilize and enrich.

In Russia it might be said that they came with a sword in the right hand and the merchants' scales in the left. The incursions began in the ninth century; the Northmen hired out their military services to the market cities on the Dněpr which the Kagans (probably pressed in the rear by the Pečenegs (Πετζανικῖται) could no longer protect. Out of these cities the Northmen carved principalities for themselves. They came as armed merchants.

In this part of the Continent they were called *Vaerings;* in Russian Варягъ in Greek Βάραγγοι. As the Varangian guards of Constantinople, they afterwards became the mainstay of the state.

In the early chronicles of Russia, all of their names are still pure Scandinavian: Thorvardr Труворъ, Hrörekr Рюрикъ, Helgi Олегъ, Ingvar Ингварь or Игорь, Höskuldr Оскольдъ, Dyri Диръ, Sikniutr Синеусъ, Rognvaldr Рогволодъ, etc. In Slav Russia, where the land was fat, but there was no good governance, these princes invaders became

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